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ASTOR, LENOX TILD: N FOU DATION





THE SAINTS'

EVERLASTING REST;

OR,

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A TREATISE ON THE BLESSED STATE OF THE SAINTS IN THEIR ENJOYMENT OF GOD IN HEAVEN.

BY

THE REV. PICHARD BAXTER: 151

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LONDON:

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Contents.

	PAGE
Dedication,	1.5
Preface,	x
Mr. Wilberforce's Recommendation,	xxii
CHAPTER L-The Introduction to the Work, with some	
account of the Nature of the Saints' Rest,	23
CHAPTER II The great Preparatives to the Saints' Rest,	41
CHAPTER IIL-The Excellencies of the Saints' Rest,	51
CHAPTER IV The Character of the Persons for whom	
this Rest is designed,	-69
CHAPTER V The Misery of those who lose the Saints'	
Rest,	88
CHAPTER VI.—The Misery of those, who, besides losing	
the Saints' Rest, lose the Enjoyments of Time, and	
suffer the Torments of Hell	103
CHAPTER VIIThe Necessity of diligently seeking the	
Saints' Rest,	118
CHAPTER VIII How to discern our Title to the Saints'	
Rest,	139
CHAPTER IXThe Duty of the People of God to excite	
others to seek this Rest,	166
CHAPTER X The Saints' Rest is not to be expected on	

CONTENTS.

7/	LOS
CHAPTER XIIDirections how to live a heavenly Life	
upon Earth,	225
CHAPTER XIII The Nature of heavenly Contemplation;	
with the Time, Place, and Temper fittest for it,	247
CHAPTER XIV What use heavenly Contemplation	
makes of Consideration, Affections, Soliloquy, and	
Prayer, 2	261
CHAPTER XV.—Heavenly Contemplation assisted by	
sensible Objects, and guarded against a treacherous	
Heart, 2	27 9
CHAPTER XVI.—Heavenly Contemplation exemplified,	
and the whole Work concluded,	197



THE INHABITANTS

ABOUGH AND FOREIGN OF KIDDERMINSTER, BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—There are obvious reasons for prefixing your names to this book. It contains the substance of what was first preached in your parish church, and was first published from the press, with a dedication to your worthy ancestors. Your trade and manufactures can never render your town so famous, as the name and writings of Mr. Baxter have already made it, both in this island, and in many remote parts of the Protestant world. His intimate and important relation to Kidderminster, and the years he abode in it, afforded him the most delightful reflections as long as he lived.

Long experience has enabled me to testify for you, that, notwithstanding your share in those common distinctions which so unhappily divide fellow-Protestants, you possess an unusual degree of candour and friendship for each other. Thus you show, that Kidderminster has not totally lost the amiable spirit which it imbibed more than a century ago.

There are no excellencies personal or relative, no species of domestic or public happiness, no beauties of civil or religious life, but what will be naturally promoted by a care to secure to ourselves an interest in the rest which remaineth to the people of God. They are the people for whom alone that

viii

designed, both by the promises of God, and the purchase of the Son of God. A care to secure that rest to ourselves, is the one thing needful. But neither this people, nor this care, you well know. are the peculiarities of any age, or of any party. If the inhabitants of Kidderminster formerly excelled in this care, you must allow that it was their greatest glory. And this more than any improvements of trade, or increasing elegancies of life, will be the greatest glory of their successors.

To excite this care, is the noblest design of all religious instruction. This, and nothing else, animates the following pages. Here, God and Christ, heaven and holiness, invite your most attentive and affectionate regards. Here, you may peruse what multitudes in the same town have heard and read before you to their everlasting joy, till your blessings prevail above the blessings of your progenitors. Here, by the help of Divine grace, you may learn the heavenly art of walking with God below, of living in a constant view and foretaste of the glories of the New Jerusalem, and of making all you say or do. suffer or enjoy, subservient to the brightening your immortal crown. Nothing has the compiler of this abridgment to wish like such consequences as these: even to see the same holy and heavenly conversa tion in himself, and in those around him, now, as Mr. Baxter saw in his day. This would be the greatest joy, and shall be the constant and fervent prayer of your affectionate friend, and obedient servant,

B. FAWCETT.

Preface.

. RICHARD BAXTER, the author of the Saints t, so well known to the world by this, and many er excellent and useful writings, was a learned, orious, and eminently holy divine, of the 17th tury. He was born near Shrewsbury, in 1615, I died at London, in 1691.

Iis ministry, in an unsettled state, was for many rs employed with great and extensive success, h in London, and in several parts of the country; : he was no where fixed so long, or with such ire satisfaction to himself, and apparent advane to others, as at Kidderminster. His abode re was indeed interrupted partly by his bad Ith, but chiefly by the calamities of a civil war:/ in the whole it amounted to sixteen years; nor' s it by any means the result of his own choice, that of the inhabitants of Kidderminster, that he3 ver settled there again, after his going from thenc e 1660. Before his coming thither, the place was rrun with ignorance and profaneness; but, by the ne blessing on his wise and faithful cultivation, uits of righteousness surung up in rich abi, in-

He at first found but a single instance or two of daily family prayer in a whole street, and, at his going away, but one family or two could be found in xii some streets that continued to neglect it. And on Lord's days, instead of the open profanation to which they had been so long accustomed, a person, in passing through the town, in the intervals of public working through the town, in the intervals of public working through the town, in the intervals of public working through the town. ship, might overhear hundreds of families engaged in singing psalms, reading the Scriptures, and other good books, or such sermons as they had written down, while they heard them from the pulpit. His care of the souls committed to his charge, and the success of his labours among them, were truly remarkable; for the number of his stated communicants rose to six hundred, of whom he himself declared, there were not twelve concerning whose sincere piety he had not reason to entertain good hopes. Blessed be God, the religious spirit which was thus happily in troduced, is yet to be traced in the town and neigh bourhood in some degree: (O that it were in a greater and in proportion as that spirit remains, the name Mr. Baxter continues in the most honourable g

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As a writer, he has the approbation of some of affectionate remembrance. trreatest contemporaries, who best knew him, were under no temptations to be partial in his fa Were under no compositions of reactions were were under no compositions of reactions withings were. B'nended, With a view to his casuistical writing.

With a view to his casuistical writing. NITER WILLIA VIEW W. III. St. Jonourable Robert Boyle, Esq., declared, " e fittest man of the age for a casuist, bec ared no man's displeasure, nor hoped for a ared no man's displeasure, not noted.

cultivated ev he had lived in been one of the fa was enough for one as Mr. Baxter." Are n thoughts of him, that ity he put him upon wi deal discourses, particular ce, his Call to the Unconverte he freely expressed it, " thoug warer the apostolical writings t age." And it is both as a pre that Dr. Bates considers him, w sermon for him, he says, " In hi grare union of arguments and a the mind, and gain the heart. reason and persuasion were opeve. There was no resisting t courses, without denying reason tion. He had a marvellous faci in speaking. There was a nobl style, for his great mind could ne ed eloquence of words; he desp but his expressions were clear as vincing the understanding, so en so engaging the affections, that as adders who were not charmed er. He was animated with th breathed celestial fire, to inspir dead sinners, and to melt the obd tombs. His books, for their seems were more than one hund:

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hile the church remanhual efficacy to recover lost souls. The ous pulse in them, that keeps the reader attentive." To these testimonies may not imerly be added that of the editors of his Practi-Works, in four folio volumes; in the preface to ch they say, " Perhaps there are no writings ong us that have more of a true Christian spirit, reater mixture of judgment and affection, or a ater tendency to revive pure and undefiled relim, that have been more esteemed abroad, or more essed at home for the awakening the secure, incucting the ignorant, confirming the wavering, mforting the dejected, recovering the profane, or approving such as are truly serious, than the practiil works of this author." Such were the appre ensions of eminent persons who were well acquaint " and his writings. It is then

for him in that capacity; as also that he offer made him, by the Lord Chancellor on, of the bishopric of Hereford, which, in actful letter to his lordship, he saw proper to e.

ectful letter to his lordship, he saw proper to e Saint's Rest is deservedly esteemed one of the valuable parts of his practical works. He wrote ien he was far from home, without any book to alt but his Bible, and in such an ill state of h, as to be in continual expectation of death for y months; and therefore, merely for his own he fixed his thoughts on this heavenly subject, ich," says he, " hath more benefited me than all tudies of my life." At this time he could be little than thirty years old. He afterwards preached the subject in his weekly lecture at Kidderster, and in 1656 he published it; and indeed it ars to have been the first that ever he published 1 his practical writings. Of this book, Dr. Bates , "It was written by him when languishing in suspense of life and death, but as the signatures is holy and vigorous mind. To allure our desires, invails the sanctuary above, and discovers the ies and joys of the blessed in the Divine presence, . light so strong and lively, that all the glittering ties of this world vanish in that comparison, and icere believer will despise them, as one of mature does the toys and baubles of children. To exour fears, he removes the screen, and makes the lasting fire of hell so visible, and represents the enting passions of the damned in those dreadful s, that, if duly considered, would check and ...

control the unbridled licentious appetites of the most sensual wretches."

Heavenly rest is a subject, in its own nature so universally important and interesting, and at the same time so truly engaging and delightful, as sufficien 'y accounts for the great acceptance which this book has met with; and partly also for the uncommon blessing which has attended Mr. Baxter's manner of treating the subject, both from the pulpit and the press. For where are the operations of Divine grace more reasonably to be expected, or where have they in fact been more frequently discerned, than ir concurrence with the best adapted means? And should it appear, that persons of distinguished judgment and piety, have expressly ascribed their first religious impressions to the hearing or reading the important sentiments contained in this book; or, after a long series of years, have found it both the counterpart and the improvement of their own divine life, will not this be thought a considerable recommendation of the book itself?

Among the instances of persons that dated their true conversion from hearing the sermons on the Saints' Rest, when Mr. Baxter first preached them, was the Rev. Thomas Doolittle, A. M., who was a native of Kidderminster, and at that time a scholar, about seventeen years old; whom Mr. Baxter himself afterwards sent to Pembroke-hall, in Cambridge, where he took his degree. Before his going to the university, he was upon trial as an attorney's clerk, and under that character being ordered by his master to write something on the Lord's day, he obeyed it with great reluctance, and the next day returned.

ST. A with an earnest desire that he might not apf himself to any thing as the employment of life. sat serving Christ in the ministry of the gospel. His praise is yet in the churches, for his pious and useful labours, as a minister, a tutor, and a writer.

In the life of the Rev. John Janeway, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, who died in 1657, we are told, that his conversion was, in a great measure, occasioned by his reading several parts of the Saints' Rest. And in a letter which he afterwards wrote to a near relative, speaking with a more immediate reference to that part of the book which treats of heavenly contemplation, he says, "There is a duty, which, if it were exercised, would dispel all cause of melancholy; I mean heavenly meditation, and contemplation of the things which true Christian religion tends to. If we did but walk closely with God one hour in a day in this duty. O what influence would it have upon the whole day besides, and, duly performed, upon the whole life! This duty, with its usefulness, manner, and directions, I knew in some measure before, but had it more pressed upon me by Mr. Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, a book that can scarce be over-valued, for which I have cause for ever to bless God." This excellent young minuster's life is worth reading, were it only to see how delightfully he was engaged in heavenly contemplation, according to the directions in the Saints' Rest.

It was the example of heavenly contemplation, at the close of this book, which the Rev. Joseph Alleine of Taunton so frequently quoted in conversa tion, with this solemn introduction, " Most divinely says that man of God, holy Mr. Baxter.

xviii

Dr. Bates, in his dedication of his funeral sermon for Mr. Baxter to Sir Henry Ashurst, Bart., tells that religious gentleman, and most distinguished friend and executor of Mr. Baxter, "He was most worthy of your highest esteem and love, for the first impressions of heaven upon your soul were in reading his invaluable book of the Saints' Everlasting Rest."

In the life of the Rev. Matthew Henry, we have the following character given us of Robert Warburton, Esq. of Grange, the son of the eminently religous Judge Warburton, and father of Mr. Matthew Henry's second wife. "He was a gentleman that greatly affected retirement and privacy, especially in the latter part of his life: the Bible, and Mr. Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, used to lie daily before him on the table in his parlour; he spent the greatest part of his time in reading and prayer."

In the life of that honourable and most religious knight, Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, we are told, that "he was constant in secret prayer and reading the Scriptures; afterwards he read other choice authors: but not long before his death, he took singular delight to read Mr. Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, and Preperations thereunto; which was esteemed a gracious event of Divine Providence, sending it as a guide to bring him more speedily and directly to that rest." Basides persons of eminence to whom this book has

Besides persons of eminence, to whom this book has been precious and profitable, we have an instance, in the Rev. Mr. Janeway's Token for Children, of a little boy, whose piety was so discovered and promoted by reading it, as the most delightful book to him next the Bible, that the thoughts of everlasting rest seemed,

even while he continued in health, to swallow up all other thoughts; and he lived in a constant preparation for it, and looked more like one that was ripe for glory, than an inhabitant of this lower world. And when he was in the sickness of which he died. before he was twelve years old, he said, "I pray, let me have Mr. Baxter's book, that I may read a little more of eternity, before I go into it."

Nor is it less observable, that Mr. Baxter himself taking notice in a paper found in his study after his death, what numbers of persons were converted by reading his Call to the Unconverted, accounts of which had received by letter every week, expressly adds, "This little book [the Call to the Unconverted] God hath blessed with unexpected success, beyond all that I have written, except the Saints' Rest." With an evident reference to this book, and even during the life of

the author, the pious Mr. Flavel affectionately says, "Mr. Baxter is almost in heaven; living in the daily views, and cheerful expectation, of the Saints' Everlusting Rest with God; and is left for a little while among us, as a great example of the life of faith."

And Mr. Baxter himself says, in his preface to his Treatise of Self-denial, "I must say, that of all the books which I have written, I peruse none so often for the use of my own soul in its daily work, as my Life of Faith, this of Self-denial, and the last part of the Saints' Rest." On the whole, it is not without good reason that Dr. Calamy remarks concerning it, "This is a book, for which multitudes will have cause to bless God for ever."

This excellent and useful book now appears in the form of an abridgment, and therefore, it is presumed

will be the more likely, under the Divine blessing, to diffuse its salutary influence among those that would otherwise have wanted opportunity or inclination to read over the larger volume. In reducing it to this smaller size, I have been very desirous to do justice to the author, and at the same time promote the pleasure and profit of the serious reader. And. I hope, these ends are, in some measure, answered: chiefly by dropping things of a digressive, controversial, or metaphysical nature; together with prefaces, dedications, and various allusions to some peculiar circumstances of the last age; and particularly by throwing several chapters into one, that the number of them may better correspond with the size of the volume; and sometimes by altering the form but not the sense, of a period. for the sake of brevity; and when an obsolete phrase occurred, changing it for one more common and intelligible. I should never have thought of attempting this work, if it had not been suggested and urged by others; and by some very respectable names, of whose learning, judgment, and piety, I forbear to avail myself. However defective this performance may appear, the labour of it (if it may be called a labour) has been, I bless God, one of the most delightful labours of my life. Certainly the thoughts of everlasting rest may be as delightful to souls in the present day, as they have ever been to those of past generations. I am sure such thoughts are as absolutely necessary now; nor are temptations to neglect them either fewer or weaker now than formerly. The worth of everlasting rest is not felt, because it is not considered; it is forgotten, because a thousand trifles are preferred before it. But were the Divine reasonings of this book duly attended to, (and O that the Spirit and grace of a Redeemer may make them so!) then an age of vanity would become serious; minds enervated by sensuality, would soon resume the strength of reason, and display the excellence of Christianity: the delusive names of pleasure would be blotted out by the glorious reality of heavenly joy upon earth; every station and relation in life would be filled up with the propriety and dignity of serious religion; every member of society would then effectually contribute to the beauty and happiness of the whole; and every soul would be ready for life or death, for one world or another, in a well-grounded and cheerful persuasion of having secured a title to that rest which remaineth to the people of God.

B. F.

KIDDERMINSTER, Drc. 25, 1708.



MR. WILBERFORCE'S RECOMMENDATION.

"I MUST beg leave to class the Rev. Richard Baxter among the brightest ornaments of the Church of England. This great man who, with his brethren, was so shamefully ejected from the Church in 1666, in violation of the royal word, as well as of the clear principles of justice. With his Controversial Pieces I am little acquainted, but his Practical Writings, in four massy folios, are a treasury of Christian wisdom: and it would be a most valuable service to mankind to revise them, and perhaps to abridge them, so as to render them more suited to the taste of modern readers. This has already been done in the case of his Dying Thoughts, a beautiful little piece; and of his Saints' Rest. His Life also, written by himself, and in a separate volume, contains much useful matter, and many valuable particulars of the history of the times of Charles the First. Cromwell, &c."-Vide his Practical View, 12mo, p. 242.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK, WITH SOME COUNT OF THE NATURE OF THE SAINTS' REST.

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- on I. The important design of the apostle in the text, to which the ore carnestly bespeaks the attention of the reader. Szcr. II. The tar rest defined, with a general plan of the work. Szcr. III. the this rest presupposes. Szcr. IV. The author's humble sense of ability fully to show what this rest contains. Szcr. V. I ton., I. A ceasing from means of grace. Szcr. VI. 3. A perfect free-from all evils. Szcr. VII. 3. The highest degree of the saint's all perfection, both in body and soul. Szcr. VIII. 4. The nearest nent of God the chief good. Szcr. IX.—XIV. L. A sweet and the same of the saint's containt. Szcr. Szcr. VIII. 4. The nearest nent of God the chief good. Szcr. IX.—XIV. L. A sweet and the same of the saint's saint and the same of the saint's saint and the same of the saint's saint and the same of the saint sai
 - vI. It was not only our interest in God, ual enjoyment of him, which was lost fall, but all spiritual knowled

most of this epistle against this distemper, and clearly and largely proves, that the end of all ceremonies and shadows, is to direct them to Jesus Christ the substance; and that the rest of sabbaths, and Canaan, should teach them to look for a farther rest, which indeed is their happiness. My text is his conclusion after divers arguments; a conclusion which contains the ground of all the believer's comfort, the end of all his duty and sufferings; the life and sum of all gospel promises and Christian privileges. more welcome to men under personal afflictions, tiring duties, successions of sufferings, than rest? It is not our comfort only, but our stability. Our liveliness in all duties, our enduring tribulation, our honouring of God, the vigour of our love, thankfulness, and all our graces, yea, the very being of our religion and Christianity, depend on the believing serious thoughts of our rest. And now, reader, whatever thou art, young or old, rich or poor, I entreat thee, and charge thee, in the name of thy Lord, who will shortly call thee to a reckoning, and judge thee to thy everlasting unchangeable state, that thou give not these things the reading only, and so dismiss them with a bare approbation; but that thou set upon this work, and take God in Christ for thy only rest, and fix thy heart upon him above

through our own unbelief or negligence: Heb. iv. 1. SECT. II. The saints' rest is the most happy state of a Christian, or it is the perfect endless enjoyment of God by the perfected saints, according to the measure of their capacity, to which their souls arrive at death; and both soul and body most fully after the resurrection and final judgment. According to this definition of the saints' rest, a larger account of its nature will be given in this chapter; of its preparatives, chap. ii.; its excellencies, chap. iii.; and chap. iv., the persons for whom it is designed. Farther to illustrate the subject, some description will be given, chap. v., of their misery who lose this rest; and, chap. vi., who also lose the enjoyments of time, and suffer the torments of hell; next will be shown, chap. vii., the necessity of diligently seeking this rest; chap. viii., how our title to it may be discerned; chap. ix., that they who discern their title to it should help those that cannot; and, chap. x., that this rest is not to be expected on earth. It will then be proper to consider, chap. xi., the importance of a heavenly life upon earth; chap. xii., how to live a heavenly life upon earth; chap. xiii., the nature of heavenly contemplation, with the time, place, and temper, fittest for it; chap. xiv., what use heavenly contemplation makes of consideration, affections, soliloguy, and prayer; and likewise, chap. xv., how heavenly contemplation may be assisted by sensible objects, and guarded against a treacherous heart. Heavenly contemplation will be exemplified, chap. xvi., and the whole work concluded. SECT. III. There are some things necessarily pre-

spect. III. There are some things necessarily presupposed in the nature of this rest; as, for instance,
that mortal men are the persons seeking it. For
angels and glorified spirits have it already, and the
devils and damned are past hope.—That they choose
God only for their end and happiness. He that
takes any thing else for his happiness, is out of tho
way the first step.—That they are distant from this
end. This is the woful case of all mankind since
the fall. When Christ comes with regenerating

grace, he finds no man sitting still, but all posting to eternal ruin, and making haste towards hell; till, by conviction, he first brings them to a stand, and then, by conversion, turns their hearts and lives sincerely to himself. This end, and its excellency, is supposed to be known, and seriously intended. An unknown good moves not to desire or endeavour. And not only a distance from this rest, but the true knowledge of this distance, is also supposed. They that never yet knew they were without God, and in the way to hell, did never yet know the way to heaven. Can a man find he hath lost his God, and his soul, and not cry, I am undone? The reason why so few obtain this rest is, they will not be convinced that they are, in point of title, distant from it, and in point of practice, contrary to it. Who ever sought for that which he knew not he had lost? "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," Matt. ix. 12. The influence of a superior moving cause is also supposed; else we shall all stand still, and not move toward our rest. If God move us not, we cannot move. It is a most necessary part of our Christian wisdom, to keep our subordination to God, and dependance on him. "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. iii. 5. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. It is next supposed, that they who seek this rest, have an inward principle of spiritual life. God does not move men like stones, but he endows them with life, not to enable them to move without him, but in subordination to himself, the First Mover. And, farther, this rest supposes such an actual tendency of soul towards it, as is regular and constant, earnest and laborious. He that hides his talents, shall receive the wages of a slothful servant. Christ is the door, the only way to this rest. "But strait is the gate, and narrow is the way," Matt. vii. 13; and we must strive if we will enter, " for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able," Luke xii. 24; which implies, that "the kingdom of heaven

suffereth violence," Matt. xi. 12. Nor will it bring us to the end of the saints, if we " begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh," Gal. iii. 3. He only "that endureth to the end shall be saved," Matt. xxiv. 13. And never did a soul obtain rest with God, whose desire was not set upon him above all things else in "Where your treasure is, there will the world. your heart be also," Matt. vi. 21. The remainder of our old nature will much weaken and interrupt these desires, but never overcome them. And considering the opposition to our desires, from the contrary principles in our nature, and from the weakness of our graces, together with our continued distance from the end, our tendency to that end must be laborious, and with all our might. All these things are presupposed, in order to a Christian's obtaining an interest in heavenly rest.

SECT. IV. Now we have ascended these steps into the outward court, may we look within the vail? May we show what this rest contains, as well as what it presupposes?—Alas, how little know I of that glory! The glimpse which Paul had, contained what could not, or must not, be uttered. Had he spoken the things of heaven in the language of heaven, and none understood that language, what the better? The Lord reveal to me what I may reveal to you! The Lord open some light, and show both you and me our inheritance! Not as to Balaam only, whose eyes were opened to see the goodliness of Jacob's tents and Israel's tabernacles, where he had no portion, and from whence must come his own destruction! not as to Moses, who had only a discovery, instead of possession, and saw the land which he never entered! But as the pearl was revealed to the merchant in the Gospel, who rested not till he had sold all he had, and bought it! And as heaven was opened to blessed Stephen, which he was shortly to enter, and the glory shown him, which should be his own possession!-The things contained in heavenly rest are such as these; -a ceasing from means of grace; -a perfect treedom from all evils ;-the highest degree of the saints' personal perfection, both of body and soul; the nearest enjoyment of God the chief good;—and, a sweet and constant action of all the powers of body and soul in this enjoyment of God.

SECT. V. 1. One thing contained in heavenly rest is, the ceasing from means of grace. When we have obtained the haven, we have done sailing. the workman receives his wages, it is implied he has done his work. When we are at our journey's end, we have done with the way. "Whether prophecies, they shall fail; whether tongues, they shall cease; whether knowledge, it also, so far as it had the nature of means, "shall vanish away," 1 Cor xiii. 8. There shall be no more prayer, because no more necessity, but the full enjoyment of what we prayed for: neither shall we need to fast and weep, and watch any more, being out of the reach of sin and tempta-Preaching is done; the ministry of man ceaseth; sacraments become useless; the labourers are called in, because the harvest is gathered, the tares burned, and the work finished; the unregenerate past

hope, and the saints past fear for ever. SECT. VI. 2. There is in heavenly rest a perfect freedom from all evils; all the evils that accompanied us through our course, and which necessarily follow our absence from the chief good; besides our freedom from those eternal flames and restless miseries which the neglecters of Christ and grace must remedilessly endure; a woful inheritance, which, both by birth and actual merit, was due to us as well as to them! In heaven there is nothing that defileth, or is unclean; all that remains without: Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 15. And doubtless there is not such a thing as grief and sorrow known there; nor is there such a thing as a pale face, a languid body, feeble joints, unable infancy, decrepit age, peccant humours, painful or pining sickness, griping fears, consuming cares, nor what-soever deserves the name of evil. "We did weep and lament when the world did rejoice; but our sorrow is turned into joy, and our joy shall no man take from us," John xvi 20, 22.



THE SAINTS' REST.

SECT. VII. 3. Another ingredient of this rest, is, the highest degree of the saints' personal perfection, both of body and soul. Were the glory ever so great, and themselves not made capable of it, by a personal perfection suitable thereto, it would be little to them. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love ' 1 Cor. ii. 9. For the eye of flesh is not capable of seeing them, nor this ear of hearing them, nor this heart of understanding them: But there the eye, and ear, and heart, are made capable; else how do they enjoy them! The more perfect the sight is, the more delightful the beautiful object. The more perfect the appetite, the sweeter the food. The more musical the ear, the more pleasant the inelody. The more perfect the soul, the more joyous those joys, and the more glorious to us is that glory.

SECT. VIII. 4. The principal part of this rest, is our nearest enjoyment of God the chief good. And here, reader, wonder not if I be at a loss; and if my apprehensions receive but little of that which is in my expressions. If it did not appear to the beloved disciple what we shall be, but only in general, that "when Christ shall appear we shall be like him," 1 John iii. 2, no wonder if I know so little. When I know so little of God, I cannot much know what it is to enjoy him. If I know so little of spirits, how little of the Father of spirits, or the state of my own soul, when advanced to the enjoyment of him! I stand and look upon a heap of ants, and see them all with one view: they know not me, my being, nature, or thoughts, though I am their fellow-creature: how little, then, must we know of the great Creator, though he with one view clearly beholds us all! A glimpse the saints "behold as in a glass," 2 Cor. iii. 18, which makes us capable of some poor dark apprehensions of what we shall behold in glory. If I should tell a worldling what the holiness and spiritual joys of the saints on earth are, he cannot and angels should a

that state in one word, what com-

I this, that it is the nearest enjoyment of Goa. full joys offered to a believer in that one senof Christ: "Father. I will that those whom hast given me be with me where I am, that may behold my glory which thou hast given John xvii. 24. Every word is full of life and If the queen of Shrba had cause to say of Solo-'s glory, " Happy are thy men, happy are these servants, which stand continually before these, that bear thy wisdom," I Kings x. 8, then sure y that stand continually before God, and see his ry, and the glory of the Lamb, are more than ppy. To them will Christ "give to eat of the se of life; and to eat of the hidden manna; yea, he Il make them pillars in the temple of God, and ey shall go no more out; and he will write upon em the name of his God, and the name of the city his God, which is New Jerusal m, which comed un out of heaven from his God, and he will writ " pame;" yea, more, if more may be

A God himself shall be with them, and be their .od. The glory of God shall lighten it, and the smb is the light thereof. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. These sayings are faithful and true, and the things which must shortly be done," Rev. xxi. 3-24; xxi. 3-6. And now we say as Mephibosheth, "Let the world take all, forasmuch as our Lord will come in peace," 2 Sam. xix. 30. "Rejoice therefore in the Lord, O ye righteous, and say with his servant David, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psalm xvi. 5 -11; xxxi. 1. What presumption would it have been, once to have thought or spoken of such a thing, if God had not spoken it before us! I durst not have thought of the saints' preferment in this life, as Scripture sets it forth, had it not been the express truth of God. How indecent to talk of being sons of God-speaking to him-having fellowship with him—dwelling in him, and he in us; 1 John iii. 1; Gen. xvii. 27; 1 John i. 3; iv. 16; if this had not been God's own language! How much less durst we have once thought of sl ining forth as the sun-of being joint-heirs with Christ-of judging the world -of sitting on Christ's throne-of being one in Him and the Father, Matt. xiii. 43; Rom. viii. 17; 1 Cor. vi. 2; Rev. iii. 21; John xvii. 21; if we had not all this from the mouth, and under the hand, of God! But, " Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numb. xxiii. 19. Yes, as the Lord God is true, thus shall it be done to the man whom Christ delighteth to honour: Esther vi. 11. Be of good cheer, Christian; the time is near when God and thou shalt be near. and as near as thou canst well desire. Thou shalt dwell in his family. Is that enough? is better to be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness: Psalm lxxiv. 10. Thou shalt ever stand before him, about his throne, in the room with him, in his presence-chamber. Wouldest thou yet be nearer? Thou shalt be his child, and he thy father; thou shalt be an heir of his kingdom; yea, more, the spouse of his Son. And what more canst thou desire? Thou shalt be a member of the body of his Son; he shall be thy head: thou shalt be one with him, who is one with the Father; as he himself hath desired for thee of his Father, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me," John xvii. 21-23.

SECT. IX. 3. We must add, that this rest contains a sweet and constant action of all the powers of the soul and body, in this enjoyment of God. It is not the rest of a stone, which ceaseth from all motion when it attains the centre. This body shall be so changed, that it shall no more be flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God; but a spiritual body. "We sow not that body that shall be; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." I Cor. xv. 37, 38, 44—50. If grace makes a Christian differ so much from what he was, as to say, I am not the man I was; how much more will glory make us differ. As much as a body spiritual, above the sum glory, exceeds these frails noisonne, diseased lump.

and enlargeth our capacity, so will he advance the happiness of those senses, and fill up with himself all that capacity. Certainly the body should not be

raised up, and continued, if he should not share in the glory. As it hath shared in the obedience and sufferings, so shall it also in the blessedness. As Christ bought the whole man, so shall the whole partake of the everlasting benefits of the purchase. O blessed employment of a glorified body, to stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and to sound forth for ever, " Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glery, and blessing; for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue,

and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests. Alleluia, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." O Christians! this is the blessed rest; a rest, as it were, without rest. "For they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come," Rev. iv. 11. v. 9, 10, 12; xix. 1, 6; iv. 8. And if the body shall be thus employed, O, how shall the soul be taken up! As its powers and capacities are greatest, so its actions are strongest, and its enjoyments sweetest. As the bodily senses have their proper actions, whereby they receive and enjoy their objects, so does the soul in its own actions enjoy its own objects, by knowing, remembering, loving, and delightind joying. This is the soul's enjoyment. By these er es it sees, and by these arms it embraces.

SECT. X. Knowledge of itself is very desirable. as the rational soul exceeds the sensitive, so It the delights of a philosopher, in discovering the ecrets of nature, and knowing the mystery of

drunkard, the unclean, and of all voluptuous sensualists whatsoever. So excellent is all truth. then is their delight who know the God of truth? How noble a faculty of the soul is the understanding! It can compass the earth; it can measure the sun, moon, stars, and heaven; it can foreknow each eclipse to a minute many years before. But this is the top of all its excellency, that it can know God, who is infinite, who made all these; a little here, and more, much more hereafter. O the wisdom and goodness of our blessed Lord! he hath created the understanding with a natural bias and inclination to truth, as its object; and to prime truth, as its prime object. Christian, when after long gazing heavenward, thou hast got a glimpse of Christ, dost thou not sometimes seem to have been with Paul in the third heaven, whether in the body or out, and to have seen what is unutterable? 2 Cor. xii. 2-4. Art thou not, with Peter, ready to say, "Master, it is good to be here!" Mark ix. 5. O that I might dwell in this mount! O that I might ever see what I now see! Didst thou never look so long upon the Sun of Righteousness, till thine eyes were dazzled with his astonishing glory? And did not the splendour of it make all things below seem black and dark to thee? Especially in the day of suffering for Christ, when he usually appears most manifestly to his people, didst thou never " see one walking in the midst of the fiery furnace with thee like the Son of God?" Dan. iii. 25. Believe me, Christians; yea, believe God; you that have known most of God in Christ here, it is as nothing to what you shall know; it scarce, in comparison of that, deserves to be called knowledge. For, as these bodies, so that knowledge, must cease, that a more perfect may succeed. "Knowledge shall vanish away. For we know in part: but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child

but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I though as a child, but when I became a man, I put aw childish things. For now we see through a g

1 Cor. xiii. 5-12. Marvei not, therefore, Christian, how it can be "life eternal to know God and Jesus Christ, John xvii. 3. To enjoy God and Christ. is eternal life; and the soul's enjoying is in knowing. They that savour only of earth, and consult with flesh, think it a poor happiness to know God. "But we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness: and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." 1 John v. 19, 20.

SECT. XI. The memory will not be idle, or useless, in this blessed work. From that height the saint can look behind him and before him. And to compare past with present things, must needs raise in the blessed soul an inconceivable esteem and sense of its condition. To stand on that mount, whence we can see the wilderness and Canaan both at once; to stand

in heaven, and look back on earth, and weigh them together in the balance of a comparing sense and judgment, how must it needs transport the soul, and make it cry out, Is this the purchase that cost so dear as the blood of Christ? No wonder. O blessed price! and thrice blessed love, that invented and condescended! Is this the end of believing? Is this the end of the Spirit's workings? Have the gales of grace blown me into such a harbour? Is it hither that Christ bath allured my soul? O blessed way, and thrice blessed end! Is this the glory which the Ser iptures spoke of, and ministers preached of so mu ch? I see the gospel is indeed good tidings, even tid i ngs of peace and good things, tidings of great joy to all n ations! Is my mourning, my fasting, my sad rablings, my heavy walking, come to this? Is by praying, watching, fearing to offend, come to Are all my afflictions, Satan's temptations, the orld's scorus and icers, come to this? -0 vile ma

ture, that resisted so much, and so long, such a blessing! Unworthy soul, is this the place thou camest so unwillingly to? Was duty wearisome? Was the world too good to lose? Didst thou stick at leaving all, denying all, and suffering any thing, for this? Wast thou loth to die, to come to this? O false heart, thou hast almost betrayed me to eternal flames, and lost me this glory! Art thou not now ashamed, my soul, that ever thou didst question that love which brought thee hither? that thou wast jealous of the faithfulness of thy Lord! that thou suspectedst his love, when thou shouldst only have suspected thyself? that ever thou didst quench a motion of his Spirit? and that thou shouldst misinterpret those providences, and repine at those ways, which have such an end? Now thou art sufficiently convinced, that thy blessed Redeemer was saving thee, as well when he crossed thy desires, as when he granted them? when he broke thy heart, as when he bound it up. No thanks to thee, unworthy self, for this received crown; but to Jehovah and the Lamb, be glory for ever.

SECT. XII. But oh! the full, the near, the sweet enjoyment, is that of love. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 John. iv. 16. Now the poor soul complains, "Oh that I could love Christ more!" Then thou canst not choose but love him. Now thou knowest little of his amiableness, and therefore lovest little; then thine eyes will affect thy heart, and the continual viewing of that perfect beauty will keep thee in continual transports of love. Christians, doth it not new sir up your love to remember all the experiences of his love? Doth not kindness melt you, and the sunshine of Divine goodness warm your frozen hearts!

What will it do then, when you shall live in love, and have all in him, who is all? Surely love is both work and wages. What a high favour that God will give us leave to love him! that he will be embrace by those who have embraced lust and sin before his unore than this he returned love for love; na

Were the arms of the Son of God open ving cross, and an open passage made to his hea this? false spear, and will not his arms and heart be thee in glory? Did he begin to love before ernal edst, and will he not continue now? Did he le now an enemy? thee, a sinner? thee, who even a that thyself? and own thee, when thou didst discl wast self? And will he not now immeasurably love thou son? thee, a perfect saint? thee, who returned have love for love? He that in love wept over the nch a rusalem when near its ruin, with what love t misrejoice over the new Jerusalem in her glory! ways, tian, believe this, and think on it; thou shalt b ciently nally embraced in the arms of that Love, which Saving from everlasting, and will extend to everlasting s when that love, which brought the Son of God's love s when heaven to earth, from earth to the cross, from hy self. eross to the grave, from the grave to glory;and the love, which was weary, hungry, tempted, scor scourged, buffeted, spit upon, crucified, pier sweet which did fast, pray, teach, heal, weep, sweat, bi and he die ;- that Love will eternally embrace thee. God in Z Comperfect created love, and most perfect uncreated le meet together, it will not be like Joseph and J.W. brethren, who lay upon one another's neck weeping Tie; it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and s a nal rowing: yet it will make Satan's court ring with t

news, that Joseph's brethren are come, that the sain

are arrived safe at the bosom of Christ, out of th

reach of hell for ever. Nor is there any such lovas David's and Jonathan's, breathing out its last in to sad lamentations for a forced separation. Know this, believer, to thy everlasting comfort, that whilst thou hangest on God by faith, neither sin, earth, nor hell, can move thee. Unrist will stick closer to the than a brother, and he is above all enemies, "with the model of the companies of the companies."

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was on earth to him, seldom and cold, up and down, He that would not cease nor abate his love, for all thine enmity, unkind neglects, and churlish resistances, can he cease to love thee, when he had made thee truly lovely? He that keepeth thee so constant in thy love to him, that thou canst challenge "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword, to separate thy love from Christ, much more will himself be constant? Rom. viii. 35. Indeed, thou mayest be persuaded, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. viii. 38, 39. And now, are we not left in the apostle's admiration: "What shall we say to these things?" Rom. viii. 31 Infinite love must needs be a mystery to a finite capacity. No wonder angels desire to look into this mystery: 1 Peter, i. 12. And if it be the study of saints here, "to know the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," Ephes. iii. 18, 19, the saints' ever lasting rest must consist in the enjoyment of God by love.

SECT. XIII. Nor hath joy the least share in this fruition.-It is that which all the former lead to, and conclude in; even the inconceivable complacency which the blessed feel in their seeing, knowing, loving, and being beloved of God. This is the "white stone, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it," Rev ii. 17. Surely this is the joy which "a stranger doth not intermeddle with," Prov xiv. 10. All Christ's ways of mercy tend to, and end in the saints' joys. He wept, sorrowed, suffered, that they might rejoice; he sendeth the Spirit to be their comforter; he multiplies promises; he discovers their future happiness, "that their joy may be full," John xvi. 24 He opens to them the fountain of living waters, that they may thirst no more, and that it may spring up in them to everlasting life," John iv. 10, 14. He

chastens them, "that he may give them rest," Psalm xciv. 12, 13. He makes it their duty to "rejoice in him alway, and again commands them to rejoice," Phil. iv. 4. He never brings them into so low a condition, wherein he does not leave them more cause of joy than sorrow. And hath the Lord such a care of our comfort here. Oh, what will that joy be, where the soul being perfectly prepared for joy, and joy prepared by Christ for the soul, it shall be our work, our business, eternally to rejoice! It seems the saints' joy shall be greater than the damned's torment, for their torment is the torment of creatures "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matt. xxv. 41; but our joy is "the joy of our Lord," Matt. xxv. 21. The same glory which the Father gave the Son, the Son hath given them," John xvii. 22; "to sit with him in his throne, even as he is set down with his Father in his throne," Rev. iii. 21. Thou, poor soul, who prayest for joy, waitest for joy, complainest for want of joy, longest for joy; thou then shalt have full joy, as much as thou canst hold, and more than ever thou thoughtest on, or thy heart desired. In the mean time, walk carefully, watch constantly, and then let God measure out to thee thy times and degrees of joy. It may be he keeps them until thou hast more need. Thou hadst better lose thy comfort than thy safety. If thou shouldst die full of fears and sorrows, it will be but a moment, and they are all gone, and coucluded in joy inconceivable. "As the joy of the hypocrite, so the fears of the upright, are but for a moment. God's anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," Job xx. 5; Psalm xxx. 5. O blessed morning! poor, humble, drooping soul, how would it fill thee with joy now, if a voice from heaven should tell thee of the love of God, the pardon of thy sins, and assure thee of thy part in these joys! What then will thy joy be, when thy actual possession shall convince thee of thy title, and thou shalt be in heaven before thou are well aware?

f his undertaking, which he is glorified in ints, and admired in all them that believe, ss. i. 10; "when he sees of the travail of his and is satisfied," Isa, liii, 11. This is Christ's st, when he shall reap the fruit of his labours; ; will not repent him concerning his sufferings, e will rejoice over his purchased inheritance, is people will rejoice in him. Yea, the Father li puts on joy too, in our joy. As we grieve Spirit; Eph. iv. 30; and weary him with our ities; Isa. xliii. 21: so he rejoiced in our good. w quickly does he now spy a returning prodigal, afar off! How does he run and meet him! with what compassion does he "fall on his neck kiss him, and put on him the best robe, and a on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and kills th: d calf to cat and be merry," Luke xv. 20-23, is indeed a happy meeting; but nothing to the racing and joy of that last and great meeting. , more; as God doth mutually love and joy, so has this his rest, as it is our rest. What an

pardon thy servant unrevealed things. are so dull; my the stupid, and my exp such a glory. I he thee ear: oh, let it these joys; and the ceptions, and shal abhor my present all these imperfeunderstood not; il I know not," Joi and therefore have Lord, canst thon from corruption, less and irreverer tion, yet the fire it y commanding, put forth my ha away these stain Imperfect, or no take thy Son's e the flesh is weak,

with fuller assurance," Heb. x. 19, 20, 22. And finding the flaming sword removed, shall look again into the paradise of our God.-And because I know that this is no forbidden fruit, and withal that it is good for food, and pleasant to the spiritual eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one truly wise and happy, I shall, through the assistance of the Spirit, take and eat thereof myself, and give to you according to my power, that you may eat. The porch of this temple is exceeding glorious, and the gate of it is called Beautiful. Here are four things, as the four corners of this porch.—Here is the most glorious coming and appearance of the Son of God;-that great work of Jesus Christ in raising our bodies from the dust, and uniting them again to the soul :the public and solemn process at their judgment, where they shall first themselves be acquitted and justified, and then with Christ judge the world;together with their solemn coronation, and receiving the kingdom.

SECT. II. 1. The most glorious coming and appearance of the Son of God may well be reckoned in his people's glory. For their sake he came into the world, suffered, died, rose, ascended, and for their sake it is that he will return. To this end "will Christ come again to receive his people unto himself, that where he is there they may be also," John xiv. 3. The bridegroom's departure was not upon divorce. He did not leave us with a purpose to return no more. He hath left pledges enough to assure us to the contrary. We have his word, his many promises, his sacraments, which "shew forth his death till he come," 1 Cor. ix. 26; and his Spirit, to direct, sanctify, and comfort, till he return. We have frequent tokens of love from him, to show us, he forgets not his promise, nor us. We daily behold the forerunners of his coming, foretold by himself. We see "the fig-tree putteth forth leaves," and there-

"we see "the fig-tree putteth forth leaves," and therefore "know that summer is nigh, Matt. xxiv. 30.

Though the riotous world say, "My lord delayeth his coming," Matt. xxiv. 48; yet let the saints "lit"

up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh." Luke xxi. 28. Alas, fellow Christians, what should we do if our Lord should not return! What a case are we here left in! What! leave us "in the midst of wolves," Matt. x. 16; and "among lions," Psalm lvii. 4; "a generation of vipers," Matt. iii. 7; and here forget us? Did he buy us so dear, and then leave us sinning, suffering, groaning, dying daily and will he come no more to us? It cannot be. This is like our unkind dealing with Christ, who, when we feel ourselves warm in the world, care not for coming to him: but this is not like Christ's dealing with us. He that would come to suffer, will surely come to triumph. He that would come to purchase, will surely come to possess. Where else were all our hopes? What were become of our faith, our prayers, our tears, and our waiting? What were all the patience of the saints worth to them? Were we not left "of all men the most miserable"? 1 Cor. xv. 19. Christians, hath Christ made us forsake all the world, and be forsaken of all the world? to hate all, and be hated of all? and all this for him, that we might have him instead of all? And will he, think you, after all this, forget us, and forsake us himself? Far be such a thought from our hearts! But why staid he not with his people while he was here? Why was not the work on earth done? Must be not take possession of glory in our behalf? Must he not intercede with the Father, plead his sufferings, be filled with the Spirit, to send forth, receive authority, and subdue his enemies? Our abode here is short. If he had stayed on earth, what would it have been to enjoy him for a few days, and then die. He hath

Sect. III. O fellow Christians, what a day will that be, when we, who have been kept prisoners by sin, by sinners, by the grave, shall be fetched out by the Lord himself! It will not be such a coming

more in heaven to dwell among; even the spirits of many generations. He will have us live by faith,

and not by sight.

th what shoutings will angels and saints by proclaim, "Glory to God, peace and goo dent wards men!" If a star must lead men from remote rts of the world to come to worship a child in a anger, Matt. ii. 2, how will the glory of his next opearing constrain all the world to acknowledge sovereignty! If, riding on an ass, Matt. xxi.—9, he enter Jerusalem with hosannas; with what ace and glory will he come towards the new Jerulem! If, when he was in the form of a servant, hil. ii. 7, they cry out, "What manner of man is is, that even the winds and the sea obey him," att. viii. 27, what will they say, when they shall e him coming in his glory, and the heavens and e earth obey him. "Then shall all the tribes of e earth mourn," Matt. xxiv. 30. To think and eak of that day with horror, doth well beseem the penitent sinner, but ill the believing saint. Shall

e wicked behold him and cry, Yonder is he, hose blood we neglected, whose grace we resisted, hose counsel we refused, whose government we st off? And shall not the saints, with inconceivele gladness, cry, Yonder is he, whose blood remed us, whose Spirit cleansed us, whose law did overn us, in whom we trusted, and he hath not de-

t heareth and readeth say, Come." Our Lord saelf says, "Surely I come quickly. Amen, even come Lord Jesus," Rev. xxii. 20.
3ECT. IV. 2. Another thing that leads to paradise

that great work of Jesus Christ, in raising our lies from the dust, and uniting them again unto soul. A wonderful effect of infinite power and e! Yea, wonderful indeed, says unbelief, if it be e. What! shall all these scattered bones and dust come a man?—Let me with reverence plead for d, for that power whereby I hope to arise. What areth the massy body of the earth? What limits vast ocean of the waters? Whence is that connt ebbing and flowing of the tides? How many ies bigger than all the earth is the sun, that glous body of light? Is it not as easy to raise the id, as to make heaven and earth, and all of nong?-Look not on the dead bones, and dust, and ficulty, but at the promise. Contentedly commit se carcasses to a prison that shall not long contain m. Let us lie down in peace and take our resta will not be an everlasting night, nor endless sleep. unclothing be the thing thou fearest, it is that ou mayest have better clothing: 2 Cor. v. 4. If be turned out of doors be the thing thou fearest, nember, that when the "earthly house of this ernacle is dissolved, thou hast a building of God, a ise not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," lor. v. 1. Lay down cheerfully this lump of corotion; thou shalt undoubtedly receive it again in orruption. Lay down freely this terrestrial, this ural body; thou shalt receive it again a celestial, a ritual body. Though thou lay it down with great honour, thou shalt receive it in glory. Though u art separated from it through weakness, it shall raised again in mighty power; "in a moment, the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the upet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised rruptible, and we shall be changed," 1 Cor. XV. 1, 52. "The dead in Christ shall rise first.

they who are alive and remain, shall be caught

up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. Triumph now, O Christian, in these promises: thou shalt shortly triumph in their performance. "This is the day which the Lord will make, we shall rejoice and be glad in it," Psalm cxviii. 24. The grave, that could not keep our Lord, cannot keep us. He arose for us, and by the same power will cause us to arise. " For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him," 1 Thess. iv. 14. Let us never look at the grave, but let us see the resurrection beyond it. Yea, let us "be stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know our labour is not in vain in the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 58. SECT. V. 3. Part of this prologue to the saints' rest, is the public and solemn process at their judgment, where they shall first themselves be acquitted and justified, and then with Christ judge the world. Young and old, of all estates and nations, that ever were from the creation to that day, must here come and receive their doom. O terrible, O joyful day:

terrible to those that have forgot the coming of their Lord; joyful to the saints, whose waiting and hope was to see this day. Then shall the world "behold the goodness and severity of God: on them who perish, severity; but to his chosen, goodness," Rom. t. 22. Every one must "give an account of his stewardship," Luke xvi. 22. Every talent of time,

health, wit, mercies, afflictions, means, warnings, must be reckoned for. The sins of youth, those which they had forgotten, and their secret sins, shall all be laid open before angels and men. They shall see the Lord Jesus whom they neglected, whose word they disobeyed, whose ministers they abused, whose servants they hated, now sitting to judge them. Their own consciences shall cry out against them, and call to their remembrance all their mis-

doings. Which way will the wretched sinner look? who can conceive the terrible thoughts of his heart? Yow the world cannot help him: his old companions

the

cannot; the saints neither can nor will; only the Lord Jesus can; but, there is the misery, he will not. Time was, sinner, when Christ would, and you would not; now fain would you, and he will not. All in vain to ery "to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne," Rev. vi. 13; for thou hast the Lord of mountains and rocks for thine enemy, whose voice they will obey and not thine. "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing,

and his kingdom," 2 Tim. iv. 1, that thou set thyself seriously to ponder on these things.

Secr. VI. But why tremblest thou, O humble, gracious soul? He that would not lose one Noah in a common deluge, nor overlook one Lot in Sodom; nay, that could do nothing till he went forth; will he forget thee at that day? "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations; and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished," 2 Peter ii. 9. He knoweth how to make the same day the greatest terror to his foes, and yet the greatest joy to his people. "There is no con-

demnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Shall the law? The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made them free from the law of sin and death. Or shall conscience? The Spirit itself bearath witness with their spirit, that they are the child-

en of God. It is God that justifieth; who is he hat condemneth," Rom. viii. 1, 2, 16, 33, 34. If ur judge condemn us not, who shall? He that said the adulterous woman, "Hath no man condemned ee, neither do I," John viii. 10, 11, will say to us

ore faithfully than Peter to him, "Though all iv thee." or condemn thee. "I

Lord, who leveth our souls, and whom our souls love, shall be our judge! Will any man fear to be judged by his dearest friend? or a wife by her own husband? Christian, did Christ come down, and suffer, and weep, and bleed, and die for thee; and will he now condemn thee? Was he judged, condemned, and executed, in thy stead; and now will he condemn thee himself? Hath he done most of the work already, in redeeming, regenerating, sanctify ing, and preserving thee; and will he now undo all again? Well then, let the terror of that day be never so great, surely our Lord can mean no ill to us in all Let it make the devils tremble, and the wicked tremble; but it shall make us leap for joy. It must needs affect us deeply with the sense of our mercy and happiness, to see the most of the world tremble with terror, while we triumph with joy; to hear them doomed to everlasting flames, when we are proclaimed heirs of the kingdom! to see our neighbours that lived in the same towns, came to the same congregation, dwelt in the same houses, and were esteemed more honourable in the world than ourselves, now by the Searcher of hearts eternally separated! This, with the great magnificence and dreadfulness of the day, the apostle pathetically expresses: "It is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day," 2 Thess. i. 6-10.

Sect. VIII. Yet more, we shall be so far from the dread of that judgment, that ourselves shall become the judges. Christ will take his people, as it were, into commission with himself, and they shall

sit and approve his righteous judgment. " Do ve not know that the saints will judge the world? Nav, know ye not that we shall judge angels," 1 Cor. vi. Were it not for the word of Christ that speaks it, this advancement would seem incredible, and the language arrogant. "Even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied this, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him," Jude 14, 15. Thus shall the saints be honoured, and the upright shall have dominion in the morning: Psalm xlix. 14. O that the careless world were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end; Deut. xxxii. 29; that they would be now of the same mind as they will be, when they shall see "the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein, burnt up!" when all shall be in fire about their ears, and all earthly glory consumed! "For the heavens and the earth, which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Pet. iii. 7-12.

SECT. IX. 4. The last preparative to the saints' rest, is their solemn coronation, and receiving the kingdom. For as Christ, their head, is anointed both King and Priest, so under him are his people made unto God both kings and priests, to reign and to offer praises for ever: Rev. v. 10. The crown of righteousness which was laid up for them, shall by the Lord, the righteous judge, be given them at that day: 2 Tim. iv. 8. They have been faithful.

unto death, and therefore he will give them a crown of life: Rev. ii. 10. And according to the improvement of their talents here, so shall their rule and dignity be enlarged: Matt. xxv. 21, 23. They are not dignified with empty titles, but real dominion. "Christ will grant them to sit with him on his throne," Rev. iii. 21, "and will give them power over the nations, even as he received of his Father; and he will give them the morning star," Rev. ii. 26, 28. The Lord himself will give them possession with these applauding expressions: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 23.

SECT. X. And with this solemn and blessed proclamation shall he enthrone them: "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," Matt. xxv. 34. Every word is full of life and joy. Come, this is the holding forth of the golden sceptre, to warrant our approach unto this glory. Come now as near as you will; fear not the Bethshemite's judgment; for the enmity is utterly abolished: Ephes. ii. 15. This is not such a Come as we were wont to hear: "Come, take up your cross and follow me," Matt. xvi. 24 Though that was sweet, yet this much more. Come from all that afflicted you to all the company of heaven. Come ye, ye who were in poverty, in sickness, in temptation, and persecution; ye who were mortal, bearing the cross after Christ; ye who acknowledged me before men and devils, and were not ashamed of my cause: ye who fought with and conquered sin, who resisted the devil, stedfast in the faith; who despised the world's pleasures, honours, and riches, and fixed your hearts upon me and my ways; ye who have been counted the offscouring of all things, and hated of all men; ye whose life was counted madness, and end without honour. Come e to my presence, to my throne, and kingdom; ome ye to dwell with me, and my Father, and his angels; Come ye and wear a crown, and bear a palm, and behold my glory; Come, ye blessed, blessed indeed! What a blessing to be brought from the verge of hell! to be washed from the defilements of sin through faith in Christ's blood! to be redeemed from the slavery of Satan, and to be made a free child of God! Blessed in life with the Spirit, the promise, and protection of God; not only blessed in life, but through life every thing hath worked together for good; blessed in and through death, blessed with a joyful resurrection, blessed before men, angels, and devils, with the favour and smiles of God. Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom,—ah! wonderful!—a kingdom prepared for thee.

Sect. XI. Thus we have seen the Christian safely

SECT. XI. Thus we have seen the Christian safely landed in paradise, and conveyed honourably to his rest. Now let us a little further, in the next chapter, view those mansions, consider their privileges, and see whether there be any glory like unto this glory.

CHAPTER III.

THE EXCELLENCIES OF THE SAINTS' REST.

Smor. I. The Excellencies of the Saints' Best are enumerated. SECT. III. It is the purchased possession. SECT. III. IV. 2. A free gift. SECT. V. 3. Peculiar to Saint. SECT. VI. 4. An association with saints and angels. SECT. VIII. 5. It derives its joy immediately from God himself. SECT. VIII. 6. It will be essenable. SECT. IX. 7. Suitable. SECT. X.—X.II. 8. Perfect without sin and suffering. SECT. X. IV. The chapter considers with a serious address to the reader.

SECT. I. Let us draw a little nearer and see what further excellencies this rest affordeth. The Lord hide us in the clefts of the rock, and cover us with the hands of indulgent grace, while we approach to take this view. This rest is excellent for being—a varchased possession;—a free gift;—peculiar vaints;—an association with saints and angels;—Yet riving its joys immediately from God;—and be

Jod; yea, the cme. all the fruits and efficacy of tunve than this there is not, to lay down the e lover. And to have this our Redeemer ever re our eyes, and the liveliest sense and freshe rembrance of that dying, bleeding love still upon o ouls. How will it fill our souls with perpetual to think that in the streams of this blood we swam through the violence of the world, the of Satan, the seducements of flesh, the curse the law, the wrath of an offended God, the acc tions of a guilty conscience, and the vexing does and fears of an unbelieving heart, and are arrive safe at the presence of God? Now he cries to w " Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behol and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow Lam. i. 12, and we scarce regard the mournful vol nor scarce turn aside to view the wounds. But # our perfected souls will feel, and flame in love love. With what astonishing apprehensions will "nomed saints everlastingly behold their ble -----haser, and the price, together

cording to his good pleasure, and the council of his

own will," Ephes. i. 9, 11.

SECT. III. 2. Another pearl in the saints' diadem is, that it is a free gift. These two, purchased and free, are the chains of gold which make up the wreaths for the tops of the pillars in the temple of God: 1 Kings vii. 17. It was dear to Christ, but free to us. When Christ was to buy, silver and gold were nothing worth, prayers and tears could not suffice, nor any thing below his blood; but our buying is receiving; we have it freely-" without money and without price," Isa. lv. 1. A thankful acceptance of a free acquittance, is not paying off the debt. Here is all tree: if the Father freely give the Son, and the Son freely pay the debt: and if God freely accepts that way of payment, when he might have required it of the principal; and if both Father and Son freely offer us the purchased life on our cordial acceptance, and if they freely send the Spirit to enable us to accept; what is here, then, that is not free? Oh the everlasting admiration that must needs surprise the saints to think of this freeness! "What did the Lord see in me, that he should judge me meet for such a state! that I, who was but a poor, diseased, despised wretch, should be clad in the brightness of this glory! that I, a creeping worm, should be advanced to this high dignity! that I, who was but lately groaning, weeping, dying, should now be as full of joy as my heart can hold! yea, should be taken from the grave, where I was rotting, and from the drust and darkness, where I seemed forgotten. and be here set before his throne! that I should be takers, with Mordecai, from captivity, and be set

er there the offering that David refused, or tise for that which cost us nothing: 2 Sam. xxiv Here our commission runs, "Freely ye have eved, freely give," Matt. x. 8; but Christ h arly bought, yet freely gives. SECT. IV. If it were only for nothing, and wit t our merit, the wonder were great; but it preover against our merit, and against our los deavouring our own ruin. What an astonishi ought it will be, to think of the unmeasurable d rence between our deservings and receivings! 1 veen the state we should have been in, and t ate we are in! to look down upon hell, and see t ast difference that grace hath made between us a nem! to see the inheritance there which we we orn to so different from that which we are adop). What pangs of love will it cause within us hink, "Yonder was the place that sin would be

to any of our duties and labours, much neglects and laziness. We know to whom is due, and must be given for ever. In his very end it was, that infinite Wisdom shole design of man's salvation into this purchase and freeness, that the love and n might be perfected, and the honour of it highly advanced; that the thought of hit neither cloud the one, nor obstruct the d that on these two hinges the gate of ght turn. So then let DESERVED be written or of hell; but on the door of heaven and REE GIFT.

3. This rest is peculiar to saints, be-

no other of all the sons of men. If all I been light, the Israelites would not have ess; but to enjoy that light alone, while hbours lived in thick darkness, must make e sensible of their privilege. Distinguishaffects more than any mercy. If Pharaoh I as safely as Israel, the Red Sea would If the rest of the a less remembered. not been drowned, and the rest of Sodom errah not burned, the saving of Noah had onder, nor Lot's deliverance so much talked a one is enlightened, and another left in one reformed, and another by his lust enmakes the saints cry out, "Lord, how is it wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto ?" John xiv. 22. When the prophet is ne widow only of all that were in Israel, cause one Naaman of all the lepers, Luke the mercy is more observable. That will a day of passionate sense on both sides, ere shall be two in one bed, and two in the one taken, and the other left," Luke xvii.

wast, art, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus," Rev. xvi. 4.

SECT. VI. 4. But though this rest be proper to the saints, yet it is common to all the saints; for it is an association of blessed spirits, both saints and angels; a corporation of perfected saints, whereof Christ is the head; the communion of saints completed. As we have been together in the labour, duty, danger, and distress; so shall we be in the great recompense and deliverance. As we have been scorned and despised; so shall we be owned and honoured together. We, who have gone through the day of sadness, shall enjoy together that day of gladness. Those who have been with us in persecution and prison, shall be with us also in that palace of consolation. How oft have our groans made, as it were, one sound! our tears, one stream! and our desires, one prayer! But now all our praises shall make up one melody; all our churches, one church; and all ourselves, one body; for we shall be all one in Christ, even "as he and the father are one," John xvii. 21. It is true, we must be careful not to look for that in the saints which is alone in Christ. But if the forethought of "sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, Matt. viii. 11, may be our lawful joy; how much more the real sight and actual possession! It cannot choose but be comfortable to think of that day, when we shall join with Moses in his song, with David in his psalms of praise, and with all the re-deemed in "the song of the Lamb for ever," Rev. xv. 3; when we shall see "Enoch walking with God," Gen. v. 24; Noah enjoying the end of his singularity; Joseph of his integrity; Job of his patience; Hezekiah of his uprightness; and all the saints "the end of their faith," 1 Pet. i. 9. Not only our old acquaintance, but all the saints, of all ages, whose faces in the flesh we never saw, we shall there both know and comfortably enjoy. Yea, angels, as cill as saints, will be our blessed acquaintance.



THE SAINTS' REST.

Those who now are willingly our "ministering spirits," Heb. i. 14, will willingly then be our companions in joy. They, who had such joy in heaven for our conversion, Luke xv. 7—10, will gladly rejoice with us in our glorification. Then we shall truly say, as David, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee," Psalm exix. 63, when we are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusslem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, who are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, Heb. xii. 22–24. It is a singular excellence of heavenly rest, that we "are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Eph. ii. 19.

SECT. VII. 5. As another property of our rest, we shall derive its joys immediately from God. Now we have nothing at all immediately, but at the seond or third hand, or how many, who knows? 'rom the earth, from man, from sun and moon, from ne ministration of angels, and from the Spirit, and hrist. Though, in the hand of angels, the stream vours not of the imperfection of sinners, yet it es of the imperfection of creatures; and as it comes m man, it savours of both. How quick and reing is the word in itself, Heb. iv. 12; yet many es it never enters, being managed by a feeble what weight and worth is there in every pasof the blessed Gospel! Enough, one would k, to enter and pierce the dullest soul, and lly possess its thoughts and affections; and yet oft does it fall as water upon a stone! The s of God which we handle are divine; but our er of handling is human. There is little we but we leave the print of our fingers behind. speak the word himself, it will be a piercing, word indeed. The Christian now knows by e that his most immediate joys are his oys; which have least of man, and are

most directly from the Spirit. Christians, who are much in secret prayer and contemplation, are men of greatest life and joy; because they have all more immediately from God himself. Not that we should cast off hearing, reading, and conference, or neglect any ordinance of God; but to live above them, while we use them, is the way of a Christian. There is joy in these remote receivings; but the fulness of joy is in God's immediate presence: Psalm xvi. 1. We shall then have light without a candle, and perpetual day without the sun; "for the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof: there shall be no night there. and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever," Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5. We shall then have enlightened understandings without Scripture, and be governed without a written law; for the Lord will perfect his law in our hearts, and we shall be all perfectly taught of God. We shall have joy, which we drew not from the promises, nor fetched home by faith or hope. We shall have communion without sacraments; without "this fruit of the vine, when Christ shall drink it new with us in his father's kingdom," Matt. xxvi. 29; and refresh us with the comforting wine of immediate enjoy-To have necessities, but no supply, is the case of them in hell. To have necessities supplied by means of the creatures, is the case of us on earth. To have necessity supplied immediately from God, is the case of the saints in heaven. To have no necessity at all, is the prerogative of God himself.

SECT. VIII. 6. A further excellence of this rest is, that it will be seasonable. He that expects "the fruit of his vineyard at the season," Mark xii. 2, and makes his people "like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season," Psalms i. 3, will also give them the crown in his season. He that will have "a word of joy spoken in season to him that is weary," Isa. i. 4, will

enemies, ·· potn صد enemies, ·· potn مدد, in his season, and reservet

rejunted weeks of harvest, and covenant that there shall be day and night in their season," Jer. v. 24; xxxiii. 20; then surely the glorious harvest of the saints shall not miss its season. Doubtless he that would not stay a day longer than his promise, but brought Israel out of Egypt on "the self-same day when the four hundred and thirty years were expired," Exod. xii. 40, 41; neither will he fail of one day or hour of the fittest season for his people's glory. When we have had in this world a long night of darkness, will not the day-breaking, and the rising of the Sun of righteousness, be then seaonable? When we have passed a long and tedious ourney, through no small dangers, is not home then easonable? When we have had a long and perilous ar, and received many a wound, would not a peace ith victory be seasonable? Men live in a contial weariness, especially the saints, who are most ary of that which the world cannot feel. Some ary of a blind mind; some of a hard heart; some their daily doubts and fears; some of the want of itual joys; and some of the sense of God's wrath. l when a poor Christian hath desired, and pro-waited for deliverance man

original, ever tends to the place from whence it comes. Temporal crowns and kingdoms could not make a rest for saints. As they were not redeemed with so low a price, 1 Peter i. 18, neither are they endued with so low a nature. As God will have from them a spiritual worship, suited to his own spiritual being, he will provide them a spiritual rest, suitable to their spiritual nature. The knowledge of God and his Christ, a delightful complacency in that mutual love, an everlasting rejoicing in the enjoyment of our God, with a perpetual singing of his high praises; this is a heaven for a saint. Then we shall live in our own element. We are now as the fish in a vessel of water, only so much as will keep them alive: but what is that to the ocean? We have a little air let into us, to afford us breathing; but what is that to the sweet and fresh gales upon Mount Sion? We have a beam of the sun to lighten our darkness, and a warm ray to keep us from freezing; but then we shall live in its light, and be revived by its heat for ever. As the natures of saints are, such are their desires; and it is the desire of our ruined nature which this rest is suited to. Whilst our desires remain corrupted and misguided, it is a far greater mercy to deny them, yea, to destroy them, than to satisfy them: but those which are spiritual are of his own planting, and he will surely water them, and give the increase. He quickened our hunger and thirst for righteousness, that he might make us happy in a full satisfaction. Christian, this is a rest after thy own heart; it contains all that thy heart can wish; that which thou longest, prayest, labourest for, there thou shalt find Thou hadst rather have God in Christ, than all the world; there thou shalt have him. wouldst thou not give for assurance of his love? There thou shalt have assurance without suspicion. Desire what thou canst, and ask what thou wilt, as a Christian, and it shall be given thee, not only to half of the kingdom, but to the enjoyment both of kingdom and King. This is a life of desire and reayer, but that is a life of satisfarent. This rest is very suitable cessities also, as well as to their na It contains whatsoever they truly plying them with gross created con Saul's armour on David, are more l fit. It was Christ and perfect hol most needed, and with these shall secr. X. S. Still more, this r lutely perfect. We shall them he

most needed, and with these shall i
Sect. X. S. Still more, this r
lutely perfect. We shall then h
sorrow, and rest without wearing
mixture of corruption with our gra
ing with our comfort. There as
waves in that harbour, which now
down. To-day we are well, to-mo

in esteem, to-morrow in disgrace, friends, to-morrow none: nay, we

fileth, neither whatsoever worketh maketh a lie," Rev. xxi. 27. W at all to have died, if heaven could

vinegar in the same cup. "If re to the third heaven, the messenge presently buffet us, and the thorn i us down," 2 Cor. xii. 2, 7. But the inconstancy in heaven. If "perfect fear," 1 John iv. 18, then perfect jog out sorrow, and perfect happiness relies of misery. We shall there evil of sin and of suffering.

SECT. XI. Heaven excludes not ly than sin, whether of nature or "There shall in no wise enter an

imperfect souls? "For this purpose was manifested, that he might dest the devil," 1 John iii. 8. His I have not done all this to leave us "What communion hath light wit what concord bath Christ with Re

know if it were offered to thy choice, thou wouldest rather choose to be freed from sin, than have all the Thou shalt have thy desire. That hard heart, those vile thoughts which accompanied thee to every duty, shall now be left behind for ever. Thy understanding shall never more be troubled with darkness. All dark scriptures shall be made plain; all seeming contradictions reconciled. The poorest Christian is presently there a more perfect divine than any here. O that happy day, when error shall vanish for ever! When our understanding shall be filled with God himself, whose light will leave no darkness in us! His face shall be the scripture where we shall read the truth. Many a godly man hath here, in his mistaken zeal, been a means to deceive and pervert his brethren; and when he sees his own error, cannot again tell how to undeceive them. But there we shall conspire in one truth, as being one in him who is the truth. We shall also rest from all the sin of our will, affection, and conversation. We shall no more retain this rebelling principle, which is still drawing us from God; no more be oppressed with the power of our corruptions, nor vexed with their presence: no pride, passion, slothfulness, insensibility, shall enter with us; no strangeness to God, and the things of God; no coldness of affections, nor imperfection in our love; no uneven walking, nor grieving of the Spirit; no scandalous action, nor unholy conversation: we shall rest from all these for ever. Then shall our will correspond to the Divine will, as face answers face in a glass, and from which, as our law and rule, we shall never swerve. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his," Heb. iv. 10; Gen. ii. 2.

SECT. XII. Our sufferings were but the consequences of our sinning, and in heaven they both shall cease together. We shall rest from all our doubts of God's love. It shall no more be said, that, Doubts are like the thistle, a bad weed, but growground."* They shall now be weeded couble the gracious soul no more. that kind of language no more: "What to know my state? How shall I know my Father? that my heart is upright? iversion is true; that my faith is sincere? my sins are unpardoned: that all I do is that God will reject me; that he does y prayers." All this is there turned into e shall rest from all sense of God's dis-Hell shall not be mixed with heaven. 1e gracious soul "remembered God and ed; complained, and was overwhelmed. to be comforted; Divine wrath lay hard and God afflicted him with all his waves." vii. 2, 3; lxxxviii. 7. But that blessed convince us, that though God "hid his us for a moment, yet with everlasting ill he have mercy on us." Isa. liv. 8. rest from all the temptations of Satan. ief is it to a Christian, though he yield emptation, yet to be solicited to deny his at a torment to have such horrid motions soul! such blasphemous ideas presented gination! sometimes cruel thoughts of valuing thoughts of Christ, unbelieving Scripture, or injurious thoughts of Probe tempted sometimes to turn to present play with the baits of sin, and venture on of flesh, and sometimes to atheism itself! vhen we know the treachery of our own ly as tinder to take fire as soon as one of s shall fall upon them! Satan hath power pt us "in the wilderness," but he entereth oly city!" He may "set us on a pinnacle ole" in the "earthly Jerusalem," but the isalem" he may not approach. He may into an exceeding high mountain," but Zion" he cannot ascend; and if he he kingdoms of the world, and the glory

^{*} Pr. Preston

of them," Matt. iv. 1-8, would be a despised bait to a soul possessed of the kingdom of our Lord. No, it is in vain for Satan to offer a temptation more. All our temptations from the world and the flesh shall also cease. O the hourly dangers that we here walk in! Every sense and member is a snare; every creature, every mercy, and every duty, is a snare to We can scarce open our eyes, but we are in danger of envying those above us, or despising those below us; of coveting the honours and riches of some, or beholding the rags and beggary of others with pride and unmercifulness. If we see beauty, it is a bait to lust; if deformity, to loathing and disdain. How soon do slanderous reports, vain jests, wanton speeches, creep into the heart! How constant and strong a watch does our appetite require! Have we comeliness and beauty? what fuel for pride! Are we deformed? what an occasion for repining! Have we strength of reason, and gifts of learning? O how prone to be puft up, hunt after applause, and despise our brethren! Are we unlearned? how apt then to despise what we have not! Are we in places of authority? how strong is the temptation to abuse our trust, make our will our law, and cut out all the enjoyments of others by the rules and model of our own interest and policy! Are we inferiors? how prone to grudge at others' pre-eminence, and bring their actions to the bar of our judgment! Are we rich, and not too much exalted? Are we poor, and not discontented? Are we not lazy in our duties, or make a Christ of them? Not that God hath made all these things our snares; but through our own corruption they become so to us. Ourselves are the greatest snare to ourselves. This is our comfort, our rest will free us from all these. As Satan hath no entrance there, so neither any thing to serve his malice; but all things there shall join with us in the high praises of their great deliverer. As we rest from the temptations, we shall likewise from the abuses and persecutions of the world. The praye of "the souls under the altar" will then be answer

and God will "avenge their

on the earth," Rev. vi. 9, 1 crowning with thorns; that Now, all that live godly in persecution; 2 Tim. iii. 12: with him shall be glorified w. Now, we must be hated of all sake; Matt. iv. 22: then, Chr. his saints that were thus hated are here made a spectacle un angels, and to men, as the filth offscouring of all things: 1 C separate us from their company and cast out our names as evil we shall then be as much gazed and they will be shut out of the c. and separated from us, whether We can scarce pray in our familie to God, but our voice is a vexation must it torment them then, to see rejoicing while they are howling You, brethren, who can now attemp without losing the love of the wor shall have none in heaven but w work, and join heart and voice w everlasting joy and praise. Till t your souls in patience," Luke xxi. 1 proaches as a crown to your heads greater riches than the world's trea righteous thing with God to recomto them that trouble you; and to you rest with Christ," 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. est from all our sad divisions, uarrels with one another. How l inds live together in heaven, who on earth! There is no conte this pride, ignor-

ethren were to behold him, when the cy d their former unkind usage. nat all the world is against us, but hat all the world is meaning in happy days of or against one another of in love, whom on, which drove us together in love, whom out, which drave us assessed in two wants of liberty and prosperity crambles into our contentions! C harmy day of the saints our contentions! O happy day of the saints our contentions: U nappy may or the saints glory, when, as there is one God, one Christieit as we shall have one hand one along the saints. giory, when, as there is one God, one Christ, arit, so we shall have one heart, one church, and we shall then rest from applyment, for ever! We shall then rest from applyments of one benchman's authorized of one benchman's authorized of one benchman. articipation of our brethren's sufferings. articipation of our presence authorized some growing of on earth is a mere hospital; some growing and a some or a some of a some or a so or or carre to a more mosquer, some growing or a dark understanding, some under an insert a heart some lengthships and a material month. wit e heart, some languishing under unfruitful weak-M s nears, some magusing unter unrunn weak.

and some bleeding for miscarriages and wiful-8, and some pieceting for miscarringes and white seeks, some crying out of their Poverty, some groan-85, some crying out of their poverty, some groan-grunder pains and infirmities, and some bewaling whole catalogue of calamities. But a far greater whole catalogue of calamicles.

The area friends are the form the first are friends are the first are friends are the first are friends. crief it is to see our dearest and most memne riends turned aside from the truth of Christ, and most member of the continuing turned aside from the truth of Christs and nothing werr negrect of Ourist and Enerr Sours, and norming will awaken them out of their security: to look on the security of the section when the security is to look on the section that the section is the section of the se will awaken mem out of meir security; to look on an ungodly father or mother, brother or sister, wife an ungodly father or fatend and think how anythinks to broken a child or fatend and think how anythinks an ungousy namer or mother, brother or sister, while or husband, child or friend, and think how certainly they shall be in hell for aver if they die in their hell for aver if they die in the state of or nusuana, emia or mena, and mink now certainly they shall be in hell for ever, if they die in their arrangement management state of think of the manual they shall be in bell for eyer, if they die in their gresent unregenerate state; to think of the gospol gresent unregenerate state; from our Israel, pool departing, the glory taken destitute. and blowing souls left willingly dark and destitute. departing, the glory taken from our and blowing soils left willingly dark and destints, to galverion out the light that should enide them sous left willingly dark and destitute, and blowing out the light that should guide them to Salvation out the light that should guide them to salvation; and the light that should guide all this, "and the Our day of rest will free us from all then they people days of mourning shall be ended; they shall inherit O Lord, shall be all righteous; they shall the will of the pranch of the planting the land for ever, the branch of anyest be glorified," of the bands, that thou mayest be glorified. of thy hands, that thou mayest be glorified, for so, of the so, of of thy hands, that thou mayest be giorned,"
lx. 20, 21. Then we shall rest from all our own
This may seem a small that thou sufferings.
Sonal sufferings.
Hose that live in ease and the thoughts of this that affiliated soul it makes the thoughts of the daily afflicted soul it makes daily afflicted soul it makes the thoughts of delighten daily afflicted soul it makes the thoughts of delightful. Othe dying life we now Our sufferings as of days and hours! sunerings as of days and hours, us, the leaves this measure of misery upon us, the leaves this measure of misery upon us, the leaves the measure of misery upon us, the leaves the leaves the measure of misery upon us, the leaves the leaves the leaves the measure of misery upon us, the leaves the l

know for what we are beholden, to mind us of what we should else forget, to be serviceable to his wise and gracious designs, and advantageous to our full and final recovery. Grief enters at every sense, seizes every part and power of flesh and spirit. What noble part is there that suffereth its pain or rnin alone? But sin and flesh, dust and pain, will all be left behind together. O the blessed tranquillity of that region where there is nothing but sweet continued peace! O healthful place, where none are sick! O fortunate land, where all are kings! O holy assembly, where all are priests! How free a state, where none are servants but to their supreme Monarch! The poor man shall no more be tired with his labours: no more hunger or thirst, cold, or nakedness; no pinching frosts or scorching heats. Our faces shall no more be pale or sad; no more breaches in friendship, nor parting of friends asunder; no more trouble accompanying our relations, nor voice of lamentation heard in our dwellings: God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes: Rev. vii. 16, 17. O my soul, bear with the infirmities of thine earthly tabernacle! It will be thus but a little while: the sound of thy Redeemer's feet is even at the door. We shall also rest from all the toils of duties. The conscientious magistrate, parent and minister, cry out, "O the burden that lieth upon me!" Every relation, state, age, hath variety of duties; so that every conscientious Christian cries out, "O the burden! O my weakness that makes it burdensome!" But our remaining rest will ease us of the burdens. Once more, we shall rest from all these troublesome afflictions, which necessarily accompany our absence from God. The trouble that is mixed in our desires and hopes, our longings and waitings, shall then cease. We shall no more look that it will be an everlasting rest. Without this all were comparatively nothing. The very thought of leaving it would embitter all our joys. It would be a hell in heaven to think of once losing heaven; as it would be a kind of heaven to the damned, had they but hopes of once escaping. Mortality is the disgrace of all sublunary delights. How it spoils our pleasure to see it dying in our hands! But, O blessed eternity! where our lives are perplexed with no such thoughts, nor our joys interrupted with any such fears! where we shall be pillars in the temple of God, and go no more out: Rev. iii. 12. While we were servants, we held by lease, and that but for the term of a transitory life; but the sun abideth in the house for ever John viii. 35. O my smaller.

thou be an numble sincere benever, and waltest with longing and labouring for this rest, thou wilt shortly see and feel the truth of all this. Thou wilt then have so high an apprehension of this blessed state, as will make thee pity the ignorance and distance of mortals, and will tell thee, all that is here said falls short of the whole truth a thousand fold. In the mean time let this much kindle thy desires, and quicken thy endeavours: up and be doing, run, and strive, and fight, and hold on; for thou hast a certain glorious prize before thee. God will not mock thee; do not mock thyself, nor betray thy soul by delaying, and all is thine own. What kind of men dost thou think would Christians be in their lives and duties, if they had still this glory fresh in their thoughts? What frame would their spirits be in, if their thoughts of heaven were lively and believing? Would their hearts be so heavy? their countenances be so sad? or would they have need to take up their comforts from below? Would they be so loth to suffer; so afraid to die? or would they not think every day a year till they enjoy it? May the Lord heal our carnal hearts, lest we enter not into this rest, because of unbelief: Heb. iii. 9.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PERSONS FOR WHOM THIS REST IS DESIGNED.

SECT. I. It is wonderful that such reat should be designed for mortals, exer. II. The people of God who similar either his rect, are, I. Chosen of God, &c., Sucr. III. 2. Given to Christ. Sucr. IV. 3. Howan again. Secr. V.—VIII. 4. Deeply convinced of the evil of sin, their missery by sin, the vanity of the creature, and the all-sufficience of Christ. Szcr. IX. 5. Their will be popurationably changed, Szcr. X. 6. They engage in coverant with Christ. Szcr. XI., and J. They persevere in their engagements. Spcr. XII. The reader widthed to examine himself by the characteristics of God's people. Szcr. XIII.

it. Spcr. XV. XVI. And that it remains for them, and is not to be enjoyed till they come to another world. Sucr. XVII. The chapter concludes with showing, that their souls shall enjoy this rest while separated from their bodies.

SECT. I. While I was in the mount describing the excellencies of the saints' rest, I felt it was good being there, and therefore tarried the longer; and was there not an extreme disproportion between my conceptions and the subject, much longer had I been. Can a prospect of that happy land be tedious? Having read of such a high and unspeakable glory, a stranger would wonder for what rare creatures this mighty preparation should be made, and expect some illustrious sun should break forth. But, behold! only a shelful of dust, animated with an invisible rational soul, and that rectified with as unseen a restoring power of grace; and this is the creature that must possess such glory. You would think it must needs be some deserving piece, or one that brings a valuable price: but, behold! one that hath nothing; and can deserve nothing; yea, that deservest the contrary, and would, if he might, proceed in that deserving: but being apprehended by love, he is brought to him that is ALL; Col. iii. 11: and most affectionately receiving him, and resting on him, he doth in and through him receive all this. More particularly, the persons for whom this rest is designed, are chosen of God from eternity; given to Christ as their Redeemer; born again; deeply convinced of the evil and misery of a sinful state, the vanity of the creature, and the all-sufficiency of Christ; their will is renewed; they engage themselves to Christ in covenant; and they persevere in their engagements to the end.

SECT. II. 1. The persons for whom this rest is designed, whom the text calls "the people of God," are "chosen of God before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love," Ephes. i. 4, 5. That they are but "Small part of mankind, is too apparent in Scriptual experience. They are the "little flock"

the world imagines; yet not so few as some drooping spirits think, who are suspicious that God is unwilling to be their God, when they know themselves willing to be his people.

SECT. III. 2. These persons are given of God to his Son, to be by him redeemed from their lost state, and advanced to this glory. God hath given all things to his Son. "God hath given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him," John xvii. 2. The Father hath given him all who repent and believe. The difference is clearly expressed by the apostle: "He hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephes. i. 22. And though Christ is, in some sense, " a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6, yet not in that special manner as for his people. SECT. IV. 3. One great qualification of these persons is, that they are "born again," John iii. 3. To be the people of God without regeneration, is as

impossible as to be the children of men without generation. Seeing we are born God's enemies, we must be new-born his sons, or else remain enemies still. The greatest reformation of life that can be attained to, without this new life wrought in the soul, may procure our farther delusion, but never our salvation. SECT. V. 4. This new life in the people of God

discovers itself by conviction, or a deep sense of Divine things. As for instance: they are convinced of the evil of sin. The sinner is made to know and feel, that the sin, which was his delight, is a more loathsome thing than a toad or serpent, and a greater evil than plague or famine; being a breach of the righteous law of the most high God, dishonourable to him, and destructive to the sinner. Now the sinner no more hears the reproof of sin as words of course; but the mention of his sin speaks to his very the worst. He was wont to marvel, what made men keep up such a stir against sin, what harm it was for a man to take a little forbidden pleasure; he saw no such heinousness in it, that Christ must needs die for it, and a Christless world be eternally tormented in hell. Now the case is altered: God hath opened his eyes to see the inexpressible vileness of sin.

SECT. VI. They are convinced of their own misery by reason of sin. They who before read the threats of God's law, as men do the story of foreign wars, now find it their own story, and perceive they read their own doom, as if they found their own names written in the curse, or heard the law say, as Nathan, "Thou art the man," 2 Sam, xii. 7. The wrath of God seemed to him before but as a storm to a man

is from the creature, and the work of God is laid upon it. Pleasure, profit, and honour, are the natural man's trinity, and his carnal self is these in unity. It was our first sin, to aspire to be as gods; and it is the greatest sin that is propagated in our nature from generation to generation. When God should guide us, we guide ourselves; when he should be our sovereign, we rule ourselves: the laws which he gave us we find fault with, and would correct; and if we had the making of them, we would have made them otherwise; when he should take care of us, (and must. or we perish,) we will take care for ourselves; when we should depend on him in daily receivings, we had rather have our portion in our own hands; when we should submit to his providence, we usually quarrel at it, and think we could make a better disposal than God hath made. When we should study and love, trust and honour God, we study and love, trust and honour our carnal selves. Instead of God, we would have all men's eyes and dependence on us, and all men's thanks returned to us, and would gladly be the only men on earth extolled and admired by all. Thus we are naturally our own idols. But down falls this Dagon, when God does once renew the soul. It is the chief design of that great work, to bring the heart back to God himself. He convince th the sinner, that the creature can neither be his God, to make him happy, nor his Christ, to recover him from his misery, and restore him to God, who is his happiness. God does this, not only by his word, but by providence also. This is the reason why affliction so frequently concurs in the work of conversion. Arguments which speak to the quick will force a hearing, when the most powerful words are slighted. If a sinner made his credit his god, and God shall cast him into the lowest disgrace; or bring him, who idolized his riches, into a condition wherein they cannot help him; or cause them to take wing, and Av away; what a help is here to this work of con-viction! If a man made pleasure his god, whatsoever a roving eye, a curious car, a greedy appetite or a lustrul heart could desire, and God should take these from him, or turn them into gall or wormwood, what a help is here to conviction! When God shall cast a man into languishing sickness, and inflict wounds on his heart, and stir up against him his own conscience, and then, as it were, say to him, "Try if your credit, riches, or pleasures, can help you. Can they heal your wounded conscience? can they now support your tottering tabernacle? can they keep your departing soul in your body; or save you from mine everlasting wrath; or redeem your soul from eternal flames? Cry aloud to them, and see now whether these will be to you instead of God and Christ? O how this works now with the sinner!

As the sinner sees his misery, and the inability of himself and all things to relieve him, so he perceives there is no saving mercy out of Christ. He sees, though the creature cannot, and himself cannot, yet Christ can. Though the fig-leaves of our own unrighteous righteousness are too short to cover our nakedness, yet the righteousness of Christ is large enough. Ours is disproportionate to the justice of the law, but Christ's extends to every tittle. If he intercede, there is no denial; such is the dignity of his person and the value of his merits, that the

Father grants all he desires. Before, the sinner knew Christ's excellency, as a blind man knows the light of the sun: but now, as one that beholds its glory.

SECT. IX. 5. After this deep conviction, the will discovers also its change. As for instance: the sin which the understanding pronounces evil, the will turns from with abhorrence. Not that the sensitive appetite is changed, or any way made to abhor its object: but when it would prevail against reason, and carry us to sin against God, instead of Scripture being the rule, and reason the master, and sense the servant; this disorder and evil the will abhors. The misery also which sin hath procured, is not only discerned, but bewailed. It is impossible that the soul should now look, either on its trespass against God, or

yet on its own self-procured calamity, without some contrition. He that truly discerns that he hath killed Christ, and killed himself, will surely in some measure be *pricked to the heart*: Acts ii. 37. If he cannot weep, he can heartily groan; and his heart feels what his understanding sees. The creature is

As turning from the creature to God, and not by Christ, is no true turning; so believing in Christ, while the creature hath our hearts, is no true believing. Our aversion from sin, renouncing our idols, and our right receiving Christ, is all but one work, which God ever perfects where he begins. At the same time the will cleaves to God the Father and to Christ. Having been convinced that nothing else can be his happiness, the sinner now finds it is in God. Convinced also, that Christ alone is able and willing to make peace for him, he most affectionately accepts of Christ for Saviour and Lord. Paul's preaching was "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," Acts xx. 21. "And life eternal" consists first "in knowing the only true God,

38, "I have been blindly led by flesh and

the world and the devil, too long, almost to r destruction; I will now be wholly at the of my Lord, who hath bought me with his nd will bring me to his glory. XI. 7. I add, that the people of God pera this covenant to the end. Though the be-12y be tempted, yet he never disclaims his mounces his allegiance, nor repents of his t; nor can he properly be said to break that t, while that faith continues which is the conit. Indeed, those that have verbally coveand not cordially, may tread under foot the the covenant as an unholy thing. This perseis certain to true believers, while they beith is made the condition of their salvation, their continued life and fruitfulness, and of inuance of their justification, though not of t justification itself, John xv. 4-9; viii.

7. ii. 25, 26; iii. 11, 12; Col. i. 23; Rom.

But eternally blessed be that hand of love, ath drawn the free promise, and subscribed ed to that which ascertains us, both of the hich is the condition, and the kingdom which condition is offered!

XII. Such are the essentials of this people Not a full portraiture of them in all their cies, nor all the notes whereby they may be I beseech thee, reader, as thou hast the a Christian, or the reason of a man, judge as one that must shortly be judged by a s God, and faithfully answer these questions. ot inquire whether thou remember the time der of these workings of the Spirit; there much uncertainty and mistake in that. If sure they are wrought in thee, the matter is eat though thou know not when or how thou v them. But carefully examine and inquire, been thoroughly convinced of a prevailing a through thy whole soul? and a prevailless through thy whole life? and how vil sin is? and that, by the covenant thou hast transpressed, the least sin deserves eternal death? Dost thou consent to the law, that it is true and righteous, and perceive thyself sentenced to this death by it? Hast thou seen the utter insufficiency of every creature, either to be itself thy happiness, or the means of removing this thy misery? Hast thou been convinced, that thy happiness is only in God, as the end; and in Christ, as the way to him; and that thou must be brought to God through Christ, or perish eternally? Hast thou seen an absolute necessity of thy enjoying Christ, and the full sufficiency in him to do for thee whatsoever thy case requires? Hast thou discovered the excellency of this pearl, to be worth thy suffice all to him it? Matt. xiii 46. Have the

thou art one of the people of God in my text? and as sure as the promise of God is true, this blessed rest remains for thee. Only see thou "abide in Christ," John xv. 4, and "endure to the end," Matt. xxiv, 13, "for if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him," Heb. x. 38. But if no such work be found within thee; whatever thy deceived heart may think, or how strong soever thy false hopes may be; thou wilt find to thy cost, except thorough conversion prevent it, that the rest of the saints belongs not to thee. "O that thou wert wise, that thou wouldst understand this, that thou wouldst consider thy latter end!" Deut. xxxii. 29; that yet while thy soul is in thy body, and "a price in thy hand," Prov. xvii. 16, and opportunity and hope before thee, thine ears may be open, and thy heart yield to the persuasions of God, that so thou mightest rest among his people, and enjoy "the inheritance of the saints in light!" Col. i. 12.

SECT. XIII. That this rest shall be enjoyed by the people of God, is a truth which the Scripture, if its testimony be further needed, clearly asserts in a variety of ways. As for instance: "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city," Heb. xi. 16. They are styled "vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory," Rom. ix. 23. "In Christ they have obtained the earnest of an inheritance." Who can be reave the Christian of that rest, which is designed for them of God? Scripture tells us, they are redeemed to this rest. "By the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holiest," Heb. x. 19, whether that entrance means by faith and prayer here, or by full possession hereafter. Therefore the saints in heaven "sing a new song unto Him who has redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation and made them kings is promised to them. As the firmament with stars, so are the sacred pages bespangled with these Divine engagements. Christ says, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasare to give you the kingdom," Luke xii. 32. I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," Luke xxii. 29, 30, &c. &c. All the means of grace, the operations of the Spirit upon the soul, and gracious actings of the saints, every command to repent and believe, to fast and pray, to knock and seek, to strive and labour, to run and fight, prove that there remains a rest for the people of God. The Spirit would never kindle in us such strong desires after beaute a Least Christ if me should

and to be the charter and grant by which we hold all our title to it.

SECT. XIV. Scripture not only proves that this rest remains for the people of God, but also that it remains for none but them; so that the rest of the world shall have no part in it. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 3. 36. "No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God," Eph. v. 5. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God," Psalm ix. 17. They all shall be damned, who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness: 2 Thess. ii. 12. The Lord Jesus shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7-9. Had the ungodly returned before their life was expired, and been heartily willing to accept of Christ for their Saviour and their King, and to be saved by him in his way, and upon his most reasonable terms, they might have been saved. God freely offered them life, and they would not accept it. The pleasures of the flesh seemed more desirable to them than the glory of the saints. Satan offered them the one, and God offered them the other, and they had free liberty to choose which they would, and they chose "the pleasures of sin for a season," before the everlasting rest with Christ. And is it not a righteous thing, that they should be d enied that which they would not accept? When God ressed them so earnestly, and persuaded them so Importunately to come in, and yet they would not; here should they be but among the "dogs without?" Though man be so wicked that he will not yield to Lie mighty power of grace prevail with him, yet s' we may truly say, that he may be saved, if he will, on God's terms. His inability, being moral, and lying in wilful wickedness, is no more excuse to him than it is to an adulterer, that he cannot love his own wife; or to a malicious person, that he cannot but hate his own brother; is he not so much the worse, and deserving of so much the sorer punishment? Sinners shall lay all the blame on their own wills in hell for ever. Hell is a rational torment by conscience, according to the nature of the rational subject. If sinners could but then say, "It was wrong of God, and not of us," it would quiet their consciences, and ease their torments, and make hell to them to be no hell. But to remember their wilfulness, will feed the fire and cause "the worm" of

Hezekiah, if they had been the choosers of their condition. Have not thy own highest praises to God, reader, been occasioned by thy dangers or miseries? The greatest glory and praise God has through the world, is for redemption, reconciliation, and salvation by Christ: and was not man's misery the occasion of that? And where God loses the opportunity of exercising his mercies, man must needs lose the happiness of enjoying them. Where God loses his praise. man will certainly lose his comforts. Oh the sweet comforts the saints have had in return to their prayers! How should we know what a tender hearted Father we have, if we had not, as the prodigal, been denied the busks of earthly pleasure and profit? We should never have felt Christ's tender heart, if we had not felt ourselves weary and heavy laden, nungry and thirsty, poor and contrite. It is a delight to a soldier, or traveller, to look back on his escapes when they are over; and for a saint in heaven to look back on his sins and sorrows upon earth, his fears and tears, his enemies and dangers, his wants and calamities, must make his joy more joyful. Therefore the blessed in praising the Lamb, mention his redeeming them out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue: and so out of their misery, and wants, and sins, and making them kings and priests to God. But if they had had nothing but content and rest on earth, what room would there have been for these rejoicings hereafter?

SECT. XVI. Besides, we are not capable of rest upon earth. Can a soul that is so weak in grace, so prone to sin, so nearly joined to such a neighbour as this flesh, have full content and rest in such a case? What is soul-rest, but our freedom from sin, and imperfections, and enemies? And can the soul have rest that is pestered with all these, and that continually! Why do Christians so often cry out in the language of Paul. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Hom. vii. 24. What makes them press towards the mark, and run that they may obtain, and strive to enter in, if they are capable of

rest in their present condition? And our bodies are incapable as well as our souls. They are not now those sun-like bodies which they shall be, when this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal hath put on immortality. They are our prisons, and our burdens; so full of infirmities and defects, that we are fain to spend most of our time in repairing them, and supplying their continual wants. Is it possible that an immortal soul should have rest in such a distempered, noisome habitation? Surely these sickly, weary, loathsome bodies, must be refined, before they can be capable of enjoying rest. The objects we here enjoy are insufficient to afford us rest? Alas! what is there in all the world to

WHO SHALL ENJOY THIS REST. as there is a worthiness must go before it. Christ will give the crown to none but the worthy. And are we fit for the crown, before we have overcome? or for the prize, before we have run the race? or to receive our penny, before we have wrought in the vineyard? or to be rulers of ten cities, before we have improved our ten talents? or to enter into the joy of our Lord, before we have well done as good and faithful servants? God will not alter the course of justice to give you rest before you have laboured, nor the crown of glory till you have overcome. There is reason enough why our rest should remain till the life to come. Take heed, then, Christian reader, how thou darest to contrive and care for a rest on earth; or to murmur at God for thy trouble, and toil, and wants in the flesh. Doth thy poverty weary thee? thy sickness, thy bitter enemies, and unkind friends? It should be so here. Do the abominations of the times, the sins of professors, the hardening of the wicked, all weary thee? It must be

abominations of the times, the sins of professors, the hardening of the wicked, all weary thee? It must be so, while thou art absent from thy rest. Do thy sins, and thy naughty distempered heart, weary thee? Be thus wearied more and more. But under all this weariness art thou willing to go to God thy rest? and to have thy warfare accomplished? and thy race and labour ended? If not, complain more of thy own heart, and get it more weary, till rest seem more desirable.

SECT. XVII. I have but one thing more to add,

for the close of this chapter,—that the souls of believers do enjoy inconceivable blessedness and glory, even while they remain separated from their bodies. What can be more plain than those words of Paul: "We are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home," or rather sojourning, "in the body, we are absent from the Lord, (for we walk by faith,

In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, it se likely Christ would so evidently intimate s pose the soul's happiness or misery present death, if there were no such matter: Luke 31. Our Lord's argument for the resurrect poses, that, "God being not the God of the but of the living," Matt. xxii. 32, therefor ham, Isaac, and Jacob, were then living: If the blessedness of the dead that die in th Rev. xiv. 13, were only in resting in the graa beast or a stone were as blessed; nay, it w dently a curse, and not a blessing. For was a great mercy? Was it not a greater mercy God and to do good, to enjoy all the comfort the fellowship of saints, the comfort of ordinan much of Christ in all, than to lie rotting in the Therefore some further blessedness is there pr How else is it said, "We are come to the spirit men made perfect?" Heb. xii. 22, 23. Sure, a surrection, the body will be made perfect as

life eternal; and that a believer on the Son hath

everlasting life? or how is the kingdom of God within us? If there be as great an interruption of our life, as till the resurrection, this is no eternal life, nor everlasting kingdom. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are spoken of as "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 7. And if the wicked already suffer eternal fire, then no doubt but the godly enjoy eternal blessedness. When John saw his glorious revelations, he is said to be in "the spirit," and to be "carried away in the spirit," Rev. i. 10; iv. 2. And when Paul was "caught up to the third heaven," he knew not "whether in the body or out of the body," 2 Cor. xii. 2. This implies, that spirits are capable of these glorious things, without the help of their bodies. Is not so much implied when John says, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God? Rev. vi. 9. When Christ says, "Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," Matt. x. 28, does it not plainly imply, that when wicked men have killed our bodies, that is, have separated the souls from them, yet the souls are still alive? The soul of Christ was alive when his body was dead, and therefore so shall be ours too. This appears by his words to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and also by his voice on the cross, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," Luke xxiii. 46. If the spirits of those who were disobedient in the days of Noah were in prison, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20, that is, in a living and suffering

SECT. I. The reader, if unregenerate, unred to consider what the b heaven will be. SECT. II. 1. The loss of heaven particularly insi SECT. III. 1. The personal perfection of the saints; SECT. IV. 3. All delightful affections towards God; SECT. A. The blessed society of angels and girdfed spirits. SECT. VII. The aggravations of the loss of heaven. SECT. VIII. The w standing of the ungoint will then be cleared. SECT. XI. 3. All larged. SECT. XI. 3. Their conceiences will make a true and class heatin. SECT. XII. 5. Their sections will be more lively. SECT. XIII. 1. The section of the chapter of the clear section. SECT. XII. 3. Their conceiences will be more lively. SECT. XIII. 1. Their manneries will be large and strong. SECT. 2. Conclusion of the chapter.

SECT. I. If thou, reader, art a stranger to Ch: and to the holy nature and life of his people, are before described, and shalt live and die in condition, let me tell thee, thou shalt never part of the joys of heaven, nor have the least taste of saints' eternal rest. I may say, as Ehud to Eg "I have a message to thee from God," Judges iii. that as the word of God is true, thou shalt never the face of God with comfort. This sentence I commanded to pass upon thee; take it as thou v and escape it if thou canst. I know thy humble hearty subjection to Christ would procure the escape.

who lose the saints rest. shall be saved, and who shut out? I answer, I

not name thee, nor any other; I only conclude it the unregenerate in general, and of thee, if thou such a one. Nor do I go about to determine wh shall repent, and who shall not; much less that tho shalt never repent. I had rather show thee wha hopes thou hast before thee, if thou wilt not sit stil. and lose them. I would far rather persuade thee to hearken in time, before the door be shut against thee, than tell thee there is no hope of thy repenting and returning. But if the foregoing description of the people of God does not agree with the state of thy soul, is it then a hard question, whether thou shalt ever be saved? Need I ascend up into heaven to know, that " without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" or, that only "the pure in heart shall see God;" or, that "except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?" Need I go up to heaven to inquire that of Christ, which he came down to earth to tell us; and sent his Spirit in his postles to tell us: and which he and they have left pon record to all the world? and though I know ot the secrets of thy heart, and therefore cannot Il thee by name, whether it be thy state or not; et if thou art but willing and diligent, thou mayest ow thyself whether thou art an heir of heaven or t. It is the main thing I desire, that if thou art miserable, thou mayest discern and escape it. thow canst thou escape, if thou neglect Christ salvation? It is as impossible, as for the devils aselves to be saved. Nav. God has more plainly frequently spoken it in Scripture of such sinners ou art, than he has of the devils. Mothinks a of thy ease would strike thee with amazernerror. When Belshazzar 's hand that

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tence or two, but in the very scope of the Scripture threatening the loss of an everlasting kingdor Because I would fain have thee lay it to heart, I wi show thee the nature of thy loss of heaven, togethe with its aggravations.

SECT. II. (I.) In their loss of heaven, the ungod

which the saints enjoy in heaven is the great loss

lose—the saints' personal perfection,—God himsel—all delightful affections towards God,—and the blessed society of angels and saints.

SECT. III. 1. The glorious personal perfectic

the ungodly. They lose that shining lustre of th body, surpassing the brightness of the sun at noon day. Though the bodies of the wicked will be raise more spiritual than they were upon earth, yet the will only make them capable of the more exquisi torments. They would be glad then, if every men ber were a dead member, that it might not feel th punishment inflicted on it; and if the whole bod were a rotten carcase, or might lie down again i the dust. Much more do they want that moral pe fection which the blessed partake of; those hol dispositions of mind; that cheerful readiness to do th will of God; that perfect rectitude of all their action Instead of these they have that perverseness of wil that loathing of good, that love of evil, that violence of passion, which they had on earth. It is true their understandings will be much cleared by the ceasing of former temptation, and experiencing th falsehood of former delusions. But they have th same dispositions still; and fam would they comm

the same sins, if they could: they want but opports nity. There will be a greater difference betwee these wretches, and the glorified Christians, tha there is betwixt a toad and the sun in the firmamen The rich man's purple and fine linen and sumptuot fare, did not so exalt him above Lazarus, while a his gate full of sores. SECT. IV. 2. They shall have no comfortal relation to God, nor communion with him.

they did not like to retain God in their knowled

but said unto him, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;" so God will abhor to retain them in his household. He will never admit them to the inheritance of his saints, nor endure them to stand in his presence, but will profess unto them, "I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity." They are ready now to lay as confident claim to Christ and heaven, as if they were sincere, believing saints. The swearer, the drunkard, the whoremonger, the worldling, can say, Is not God our Father as well as yours? But when Christ separates his followers from his foes, and his faithful friends from his deceived flatterers, where then will be their presumptuous claim? Then they shall find that God is not their Father; because they would not be his people. As they would not consent that God by his Spirit should dwell in them, so the tabernacle of wickedness shall have no fellowship with him, nor the wicked inhabit the city of God. Only they that walked with God here, shall live and be happy with him in heaven. Little does the world know what a loss that soul hath, who loses God. What a dungeon would the earth be if it had lost the sun! what a loathsome carrion the body, if it had lost the soul! yet all these things are nothing to the loss of God. As the enjoyment of God is the heaven of the saints, so the loss of God is the hell of the ungodly. And as the enjoying of God is the enjoying of all, so the loss of God is the loss of all.

tions towards God. That transporting knowledge; those delightful views of his glorious face; the inconceivable pleasure of loving him; the apprehensions of his infinite love to us; the constant joys of his saints; and the rivers of consolation with which he satisfies them. Is it nothing to lose all this? The

Sect. V. 3. They also lose all delightful affec-

SECT. VI. 4. They shall be deprive blessed society of angels and glorified sa stead of being companions of those hapt and numbered with those triumphant ki must be members of the corporation of he they shall have companions of a far differ and quality. Scorning and abusing the sair them, and rejoicing in their calamities, we way to obtain their blessedness. Now you out of that company, from which you first yourselves, and are separated from them we you would not be joined. You could not them in your houses, nor towns, nor sear kingdom. You took them, as Ahab did I the "troublers of the land," and as the apotaken for "men that turned the world upsit If any thing fell out amiss, you though owing to them. When they were dead or you were glad they were gone, and the country well rid of them. They moleste

SECT. VII. (II.) I know many will be ready to think they could not spare these things in this world well enough; and why may they not be without them in the world to come? Therefore, to show them that this loss of heaven will then be most tormenting, let them now consider,—their understand-

them that this loss of heaven will then be most tormenting, let them now consider,—their understandings will be cleared to know their loss, and have more enlarged apprehensions concerning it; their consciences will make a closer application of it to themselves; their affections will no longer be stupi-

fied, nor their memories be treacherous. SECT. VIII. 1. The understanding of the ungodly will then be cleared to know the worth of that which they have lost. Now they lament not their loss of God, because they never knew his excellence; nor the loss of that holy employment and society, for they were never sensible what they were worth. A man that has lost a jewel, and took it but for a common stone, is never troubled at his loss; but when he comes to know what he lost, then he laments it. Though the understanding of the damned will not be sanctified, yet they will be cleared fron a multitude of errors. They now think that their honours, estates, pleasures, health, and life, are better worth their labour than the things of another world; but when these things have left them in misery, when they experience the things which before they did but read and hear of, they will be of another mind. They would not believe that water would drown till they were in the sea; nor the fire burn till they were cast into it: but when they feel they will easily believe. All that error of mind which made them set light by God, and abhor his worship, and vilify his people, will then be confuted and removed by experience. Their knowledge shall be increased,

that their sorrows may be increased. Poor souls!

how whether boy, lead sleep, and dream they are the uaprile world; but when death awakes them, their judgments be changed in a moment! and that would not see, shall then see, and be asham.

SECT. IX. 2. As their understanding will cleared, so it will be more enlarged, and made capacious to conceive the worth of that glory wh they have lost. The strength of their appreh sions, as well as the truth of them, will then be creased. What deep appreliensions of the wrath God, the madness of sinning, the misery of sinn have those souls that now endure this misery comparison with those on earth that do but hear it! What sensibility of the worth of life has condemned man that is going to be executed. pared with what he was wont to have in the tim his prosperity! Much more will the actual low eternal blessedness make the damned exceedi apprehensive of the greatness of their loss; ar a large vessel will hold more water than a she '- more enlarged understandings co

warnings in vain. Let a minister of Christ show 1 their miscry ever so plainly and faithfully, will not be persuaded they are so miserable. him tell them of the glory they must lose, and sufferings they must feel, and they think he ns not them, but some notorious sinners. It is of the hardest things in the world to bring a ed man to know that he is wicked, or to make see himself in a state of wrath and condemna-Though they may easily find, by their strangeto the new birth, and their enmity to holiness, they never were partakers of them; yet they as ly expect to see God and be saved, as if they the most sanctified persons in the world. How om do men cry out, after the plainest discovery eir state, " I am the man!" or acknowledge, that ey die in their present condition, they are unfor ever. But when they suddenly find themas in the land of darkness, feel themselves in ching flames, and see they are shut out of the ence of God for ever, then the application of 's anger to themselves will be the easiest matter ie world. They will then roar out these forced essions: O my misery! O my folly! O my ineivable, irrecoverable loss! CT. XI. 4. Then will their affections likewise nore lively, and no longer stupified. A hard t now makes heaven and hell seem but trifles. have showed them everlasting glory and misery, they are as men asleep; our words are as stones against a wall, which fly back in our faces. We of terrible things, but it is to dead men; we the wounds, but they never feel us; we speak cks rather than to men: the earth will as soon ble as they. But when these dead souls are red, what passionate sensibility! what working tions! what pangs of horror! what depth of sorwill there then he! How violently will they fly ir own faces! How will they rage against their · madness! The lamentations of the most affecwife for the loss of her husband, or of the tensufferings, so themac...

Even Satan, as he was not so great a sinning as themselves, he will not be so great a strument of their torment. How happy would think themselves, then, if they were turned rocks, or any thing that had neither passion sense! How happy, if they could then feel as it as they were wont to hear! if they could sleen the time of execution as they did the time of the mons that warned them of it! But their stupid; gone; it will not be.

SECT. XII. 5. Their memories will moreover large and strong as their understanding and affect Could they but lose the use of their memory, loss of heaven being forgotten, would little to them. Though they would account annihila singular mercy, they cannot lay aside any p their being. Understanding, conscience, affer memory, must all live to torment them, which have helped to their happiness. As by the should have fed upon the love of God, and

WHO LOSE THE SAINTS' REST. 97 thraldom, that which way soever they look, they may still behold it. It will torment them to think of the greatness of the glory they have lost. If it had been what they could have spared, or a loss to be repaired with any thing else, it had been a smaller matter. If it had been health, or wealth, or friends, or life, it had been nothing. But O! to lose that exceeding eternal weight of glory! It will also torment them to think of the possibility they once had of obtaining Then they will remember, "Time was when I was as fair for the kingdom as others. I was set upon the stage of the world: if I had played my part wisely and faithfully, I might now have had possession of the inheritance. I who am now tormented with these damned fiends might have been among yonder blessed saints. The Lord did set before me

life and death; and having chosen death, I deserve to suffer it. The prize was held out before me; if I had run well. I might have obtained it; if I had striven, I might have had the victory; if I had fought valiantly, I had been crowned." It will yet more torment them to remember, that their obtaining the erown was not only possible, but very probable. It will wound them to think, "I had once the gales of the Spirit ready to have assisted me. I was proposing to be another man, to have cleaved to Christ, and forsake the world. I was almost resolved to have been wholly for God. I was once even turning from my base seducing lusts. I had cast off my old companions, and was associating with the godly Yet I turned back, lost my hold, and broke my promises. I was almost persuaded to be a real Christian, yet I conquered those persuasions. What workings were in my heart, when a faithful minister pressed home the truth. O how fair was I once for

heaven! I almost had it, and yet I have lost it.

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I had improved, I might now have been happy Wretch that I was! could I find no time to study the work for which I had all my time! no time among all my labours to labour for eternity. Had I time to eat, and drink, and aleep, and none to save means? Had I time for mirth and vain discourse, an none for prayer? Could I take time to secure the world, and none to try my title to heaven? O precious time! I had once enough, and now I mushave no more. I had once so much, I knew no what to do with it; and now it is gone, and cannot he recalled. O that I had but one of those years the live over again! How speedily would I repent llow earneastly would I pray! How diligently would hear! How closely would I examine my state flow strictly would I live! But it is now too late abad too late."

alas! too late." HEGT. XIV. It will add to their calamity to re member how oft they were persuaded to return " I'ain would the minister have had me escape thes torments. With what love and compassion did h however me; and yet I did but make a jest of it How often did he convince me; and yet I stifled a those convictions. How did he open to me my ver heart; and yet I was loath to know the worst of my self. () how glad would he have been if he coul have seen me cordially turn to Christ. My godl triends admonished me. They told me what woul become of my wilfulness and negligence at last; br I neither believed nor regarded them. How lon did God himself condescend to entrest me! Ho did the Spirit strive with my heart, as if he was loat to take a denial! How did Christ stand knocking and Sabbath after another, and crying to me, " Open sonner, open thy heart to thy Saviour; and I wi come in and sup with thee, and thou with me! Whe does thou delay? How long shall thy vain though their within thee? Wilt thou not be pardoned, as smelting, and made happy? When shall is once by " how the reculerations of such Divine pleadings

wer water transport the damped with self-indi

tion! "Must I tire out the patience of Christ? Must I make the God of heaven follow me in vain, till I had wearied him with crying to me, Repent, return! O how justly is that patience now turned into fury, which falls upon me with irresistible violence! When the Lord cried to me, Wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be? my heart, or

at least my practice answered, Never. And now when I cry, How long shall it be till I am freed from this torment? how justly do I receive the same answer, Never, never."

SECT. XV. It will also be most cutting to remember on what easy terms they might have espaned their misery. This work was not to remove

eaped their misery. This work was not to remove mountains, nor conquer kingdoms, nor fulfil the law to the smallest tittle, nor satisfy justice for all their transgressions. The yoke was easy, and the burden light, which Christ would have laid upon them. It was but to repent, and cordially accept him for their Saviour; to renounce all other happiness, and take the Lord for their supreme good; to renounce the world and the flesh, and submit to his meek and gracious government; and to forsake the ways of their own devising, and walk in his holy delightful way. "Ah," thinks the poor tormented wretch, "how justly do I suffer all this, who would not be

derstanding when I neglected that gracious offer; when I called the Lord a hard master, and thought his pleasant service a bondage, and the service of the devil and the flesh the only freedom? Was I not a thousand times worse than mad when I censured the holy way of God as needless preciseness; when I thought the laws of Christ too strict, and all too much that I did for the life to come? What would all sufferings for Christ and well-doing have

at so small pains to avoid it! Where was my un-

matter; whether to live in continual fears and sorrows, or to suffer death a hundred times over; shoul I not have done it? How much more when he only said, "Believe, and be saved. Seek my face, and thy soul shall live. Take up thy cross and follow me. and I will give thee everlasting life." O gracious offer! O easy terms! O cursed wretch, that would

not be persuaded to accept them!

SECT. XVI. This also will be a most tormenting. consideration, to remember what they sold their eternal welfare for. When they compare the value of the pleasures of sin with the value of the recompense of reward, how will the vast disproportion astonish them! To think of the low delights of the flesh, or the applauding breath of mortals, or the possessing heaps of gold; and then to think of everlasting glory. "This is all I had for my soul, my God, my hopes of blessedness!" It cannot possibly be expressed how these thoughts will tear his very heart. Then will he exclaim against his folly: "O miserable wretch! Did I set my soul to sale for so base a price? Did I part with my God for a little dirt and dross; and sell my Saviour, as Judas, for a little silver? I had but a dream of delight for my hopes of heaven; and, now 1 am awakened, it is all vanished. My morsels are now turned to gall, and my cups to wormwood. they were past my taste, the pleasure perished. And is this all that I have had for the inestimable treasure? What a mad exchange did I make! What if I had gained all the world, and lost my soul? But, alas! how small a part of the world was it for which I gave up my part in glory!" O that sinners would think of this when they are swimming in the delights of the flesh, and studying how to be rich and honourable in the world! When they are desperately venturing upon known transgression, and sinning against the checks of conscience.

SECT. XVII. It will add yet more to their torment, when they consider that they most wilfully procured their own destruction. Had they been forced to sin, passould much abate the rage of their consciences;

20W rebellion, and were mere volunteers in the service (hen the devil. An. SECT. XVIII. The wound in their conscience D':3will be yet deeper, when they shall not only remen at if ber it was their own doing, but that they were at s ³u⁺. much cost and pains for their own damnation. Wha vie'a great undertakings did they engage in to effect th ·uld ruin; to resist the Spirit of God; to overcome the d← power of mercies, judgments, and even the word \mathbf{a} nd God; to subdue the power of reason, and silene elvconscience! All this they undertook and performed $n_{i'}$ Though they walked in continual danger of the wrat of God, and knew he could lay them in the dust, an ıt. east them into hell in a moment, yet would they re чĺ

mpon all this. O the labour it costs sinners to darmaned! Sobriety, with health and ease, they make the had at a cheaper rate; yet they will rather

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gluttony and drunkenness, with poverty, shame, and sickness. Contentment they might have with east and delight, yet they will rather have covetousness and ambition, though it cost them cares and fears labour of body, and distraction of mind. Though their anger be self-torment, and revenge and envy consume their spirits; though uncleanness destroy their bodies, estates, and good names; yet will they do and suffer all this rather than suffer their soul to be saved. With what rage will they lament their folly, and say, "Was damnation worth all my cos and pains? Might I not have been damned on free cost, but I must purchase it so dearly? I thought ! could have been saved without so much ado; and could I not have been destroyed without so much ado? Must I so laboriously work out my own dam nation, when God commanded me to work out my own salvation? If I had done as much for heaver as I did for hell, I had surely had it. I cried out o the tedious way of godliness, and the painful course of self-denial, and yet I could be at a great dea more pains for Satan and for death. Had I love Christ as strongly as I did my pleasures, and profits and honours, and thought on him as often, and sough him as painfully, O how happy had I now been But justly do I suffer the flames of hell for buying them so dear, rather than have heaven when it was purchased to my hands."

SECT. XIX. O that God would persuade thee reader, to take up these thoughts now, for preventing the inconceivable calamity of taking them up in bell as thy own tormentor! Say not, that they are only imaginary. Read what Dives thought, "being is torments," Luke xvi. As the joys of heaven are chiefly enjoyed by the rational soul in its rational actings. so must the pains of hell be suffered. As they will be men still, so will they feel and act as men.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MISRRY OF THOSE, WHO, BESIDES LOSING THE SAIRTS' REST, LOSE THE ENJOYMENTS OF TIME, AND SUFFER THE TORMENTS OF HELL.

learn I. The connection of this with the preceding chapter. Smor. II.

1. The enjoyments of time which the damned lose. Sarr. III. 1.

These presumptiones belief of their interest in God and Christ. Sarr.

IV. 2. All their hopes. Smor. V. 3. All their peace of conscience.

Smor. VI. 4. All their carnal mirth. Smor. VII. 5. All their sensessed editions of the damned are

senseeding great. Smor. XII. (II.) The torments of the damned are

exceeding great. Smor. XII. 1. The principal author of them is God

hiemail. Smor. X. 3. The place or state of torment. Smor. XII. 4.

God will sake pleasure in exceeting them. Smor. XIII. 5. Satan and

God will lake pleasure in exceeting them. Smor. XIII. 5. Satan and

toyments will be universal; Smor. X. 7. Without any mitigation:

Smor. X. VII. 8. And elernal. Smor. X. VIII. The obtinate sinner

casviness of his folly in venturing on these torments; Smor. X. VIII.

And cantracted to fly for ansaty to Christ.

SECT. I. As godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; and if we "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," then all meaner things shall be added unto us: so also are the ungodly threatened with the loss both of spiritual and temporal blessings; and because they sought not first God's kingdom and righteousness, therefore shall they lose both it and that which they did seek, and there "shall be taken from them that little which they have." If they could but have kept their present enjoyments, they would not have much cared for the loss of heaven. If they had lost and forsaken all for Christ, they would have found all again in him; for he would have been all in all to them. But now they have forsaken Christ for other things, they shall lose Christ, and that also for which they forsook him; even the enjoyments of time, besides suffering the torments of hell.

SECT. II. [I.] Among the enjoyments of time, they shall particularly lose—their presumptuous belief of their interest in the favour of God, and the merits of Christ.—all their hopes,—all their false peace

conscience,—all their carnal mirth, and all their sensual delights.

SECT. III. 1. They shall lose their presumptuous belief of their interest in the favour of God, and the merits of Christ. This false belief now supports their spirits, and defends them from the terrors that would otherwise seize upon them. But what will ease their trouble, when they can believe no longer, nor rejoice any longer? If a man be near to the greatest mischief, and yet strongly conceit that he is in safety, he may be as cheerful as if all were well. If there were no more to make a man happy, but to believe that he is so, or shall be so, happiness would be far more common than it is like to be. As true faith is the leading grace in the regenerate, so is false faith the leading vice in the unregenerate. Why do such multitudes sit still, when they might have pardon, but that they verily think they are pardoned already? If you could ask thousands in hell, what madness brought them thither? they would most of them answer, "We made sure of being saved, till we found ourselves damned. We would have been more earnest seekers of regeneration and the power of godliness, but we verily thought we were Christians before. We have flattered ourselves into these torments, and now there is no remedy. Reader, I must in faithfulness tell thee, that the confident belief of their good state, which the careless, unholy, unhumbled multitude, so commonly boast of, will prove in the end but a soul-damning delusion. There is none of this believing in hell. It was Satan's stratagem, that being blindfold they might follow him the more boldly; but then he will uncover their eyes, and they shall see where they are.

SECT. IV. 2. They shall lose all their hopes. In this life, though they were threatened with the wrath of God, yet their hope of escaping it bore up their hearts. We can now scarce speak with the vilest drunkard, or swearer, or scoffer, but he hopes to be vived for all this. O happy world, if salvation were common as this hope! Nay, so strong are men's

hopes, that they will dispute the cause with Christ himself at judgment, and plead their having "eat and drank in his presence, and prophesied in his name, and in his name cast out devils;" they will stiffly deny that ever they neglected Christ in hunger, nakedness, or in prison, till he confutes them with the sentence of their condemnation. O the sad state of those men when they must bid farewell to all their hopes! "When a wicked man dieth, his expectations shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth," Prov. xi. 7. "The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the glost," Job. xi. 20. The giving up the glost is a fit, but terrible resemblance of a wicked man giving up his hopes. As the soul departeth not from the body without the greatest pain; so doth the hope of the wicked depart. The soul departs from the body suddenly, in a moment, which hath there delightfully continued so many years: just so doth the hope of the wicked depart. The soul will never more return to live with the body in this world; and the hope of the wicked takes an everlasting farewell of his soul. A miracle of resurrection shall again unite soul and body, but there shall be no such miraculous resurrection of the damned's Methinks it is the most pitiable sight this world affords, to see such an ungodly person dying, and to think of his soul and his hopes departing together With what a sad change he appears in another world! Then if a man could but ask that hopeless soul, " Are you as confident of salvation as you were wont to be?" what a sad answer would be returned. O that careless sinners would be awakened to think of this Reader, rest not till thou canst give a reason of all thy hopes grounded upon Scripture promises; that they purify thy heart; that they quicken thy endeavours in godliness; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest, and the more exact is thy obedience. If thy hopes be such as these, go on in the strength of the Lord, hold fast thy hope, and never shall it make thee ashamed. But if thou has

must be the first means to bring him in again? must despair of ever coming to his journey's e the way that he is in. If his home be eastware he is going westward, as long as he hopes he is he will go on; and as long as he goes on hopingoes farther amiss. When he despairs of o home, except he turn back, then he will return then he may hope. Just so it is, sinner, wit soul: thou art born out of the way to heaven hast proceeded many a year: thou goest on, and to be saved, because thou art not so bad as others. Except thou throwest away those hop seest that thou hast all this while been quite the way to heaven, thou wilt never return a saved. There is nothing in the world more to keep thy soul out of heaven, than thy false of being saved, while thou art out of the way vation. See then how it will aggravate the of the damned, that with the loss of heaver shall lose all that hope of it which now supports

They will lose all that false

comes, and gives it terrible alarms of judgment and hell, batters it with the ordnance of his threats and terrors, forces it to yield to his mere mercy, and take him for the governor: then doth he cast out Satan, " overcome him, take from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divide his spoils," Luke xi. 22, and then doth he establish a firm and lasting peace. If therefore thou art yet in that first peace, never think it will endure. Can thy soul have lasting peace, in enmity with Christ? Can he have peace, against whom God proclaims war? I wish thee no greater good than that God break in upon thy care-less heart, and shake thee out of thy false peace, and make thee lie down at the feet of Christ, and say, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" and so receive from him a better and surer peace, which will never be quite broken, but be the beginning of thy everlasting peace, and not perish in thy perishing, as the groundless peace of the world will do. SECT. VI. 4. They shall lose all their carnal mirth. They will themselves say of their "laughter, It is mad; and of their mirth, What doeth it?"

Eccles. ii. 2. It was but "as the crackling of thorns under a pot," Eccles. vii. 6. It made a blaze for a while, but it was presently gone, and returned no more. The talk of death and judgment was irksome to them, because it damped their mirth. They could not endure to think of their sin and danger, because these thoughts sunk their spirits. They knew not what it was to weep for sin, or to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. They could laugh away sorrow, and sing away cares, and drive away those melancholy thoughts. To meditate and pray, they fancied would be enough to make them miscrable or run mad. Poor souls, what a misery will that life be, where you shall have nothing but sor-

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great deal of sorrow. But, surely, a little godl sorrow, which would have ended in eternal joy, ha been worth much more than all your foolish mirtl for the end of such mirth is sorrow.

SECT. VII. 5. They shall also lose all their ser sual delights. That which they esteemed their chic good, their heaven, their god, must they lose, as we as God himself. What a fall will the proud ambit ous man have from the top of his honours! As hi dust and bones will not be known from the dust an bones of the poorest beggar; so neither will his sot be honoured and favoured more than theirs. Wha a number of the great, noble, and learned, will b shut out of the presence of Christ! They shall no

find their magnificent buildings, soft beds, and eas couches. They shall not view their curious garden their pleasant meadows, and plenteous harvests Their tables will not be so furnished nor attended The rich man is there no more clothed in purple an fine linen, nor fareth sumptuously every day. is no expecting the admiration of beholders. shall spend their time in sadness, and not in sport and pastimes. What an alteration will they the find? The heat of their lust will be then abated How will it even cut them to the heart to look eac other in the face! What an interview will there the be, cursing the day that ever they saw one another () that sinners would now remember, and say, "Wi these delights accompany us into the other world Will not the remembrance of them be then our to ment? Shall we then take this partnership in vic

sure? Come, as we have sinned together, let us pra together that God would pardon us; and let us hel one another towards heaven, instead of helping t deceive and destroy each other." O that men kner but what they desire, when they would so fain hav things suited to the desires of the flesh! it is t to desire their temptations to be increased, and the

for true friendship? Why should we sell such lastin incomprehensible joys for a taste of seeming ples

snares streengthened.

SECT. VIII. (II.) As the loss of the saints' rest will be aggravated by losing the enjoyments of time, it will be much more so by suffering the torments of hell. The exceeding greatness of such torments may appear by considering,—the principal author of them, which is God himself;—the place or state of torment; -that these torments are the fruit of Divine vengeance;—that the Almighty takes pleasure in them; -that Satan and sinners themselves shall be God's executioners;—that these torments shall be univer-

sal, without mitigation, and without end.

SECT. IX. 1. The principal author of hell tor-ments is God himself. As it was no less than God whom the sinners had offended, so it is no less than God who will punish them for their offences. He hath prepared those torments for his enemies. His continued anger will still be devouring them. His breath of indignation will kindle the flames. His wrath will be an intolerable burden to their souls. If it were but a creature they had to do with, they might better bear it. Woe to him that falls under the strokes of the Almighty! "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31. It were nothing in comparison to this, if all the world were against them, or if the strength of all the creatures were united in one to inflict their penalty. They had now rather venture to displease God than displease a landlord, a customer, a master, a friend, a neighbour, or their own flesh; but then they will wish a thousand times in vain, that they had been hated of all the world, rather than have lost the favour of God. What a consuming fire is his wrath? If it be kindled here but a little, how do we wither like the grass? How soon doth our strength decay, and turn to weakness, and our beauty to deformity. The flames do not so easily run through the dry stubble, as the wrath of God will consume these wretches. They that could not bear a prison, or a gibbet, or a fire, for Christ, nor scarce a few scotis. how will they now bear the devouring flames of Divine wrath.

2. The place or state of torment is purposely ordained to glorify the justice of God. When God would glorify his power, he made the worlds. The comely order of all his creatures declareth his wisdom. His providence is shown in sustaining all things. When a spark of his wrath kindles upon the earth, the whole world, except only eight persons, are drowned; Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, are burnt with fire from heaven; the sea shuts her mouth upon some; the earth opens and swallows up others; the pestilence destroys by thousands. What a standing witness of the wrath of God is the present deplorable state of the Jews! Yet the glorifying the mercy and justice of God, is intended most eminently for the life to come. As God will then glorify his mercy in a way that is now beyond the comprehension of the saints that must enjoy it; so also will he manifest his justice to be indeed the justice of God. The everlasting flames of hell will not be thought too hot for the rebellious; and when they have there burned through millions of ages, he will not repent him of the evil which is befallen them. Woe to the soul that is thus set up as a butt for the wrath of the Almighty to shoot at; and as a bush that must burn in the flames of his jealousy, and never be consumed!

SECT. XI. 3. The torments of the damned must

be extreme, because they are the effect of Divine vengeance. Wrath is terrible, but revenge is implacable. When the great God shall say, "My rebellious creatures shall now pay for all the abuse of my patience. Remember how I waited your leisure in vain, how I stooped to persuade and entreat you. Did you think I would always be so slighted?" Then will he be revenged for every abused mercy, and for all their neglects of Christ and grace. O that men would foresee this, and please God better in preventing their woe!

SECT. XII. 4. Consider also, that though God had rather men would accept of Christ and mercy, yet when they persist in rebellion, he will take plea

sure in their execution. He tells us, "Fury is not in me;" yet he adds, "Who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together." Wretched creatures! when "he that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that formed them will show them no favour," Isa. xxvii. 4, 11; "as the Lord rejoiced over them to do them good; so the Lord will relate over them to destroy them, and to bring them to nought," Deut. xxviii. 63. Woe to the souls whom God rejoiceth to punish! "He will laugh at their calamity, he will mock when their fear cometh; when their fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon them," Prov. i. 26, 27. Terrible thing, when none in heaven or earth can help them but God, and he shall rejoice in their calamity! Though Scripture speaks of God's laughing and mocking, not literally, but after the manner of men; yet it is such an act of God in tormenting the sinner, which cannot otherwise be more fitly expressed.

Short. XIII. 5. Consider that Satan and themselves shall be God's executioners. He that was here so successful in drawing them from Christ, will then be the instrument of their punishment for yielding to his temptations. That is the reward he will give them for all their service; for their rejecting the commands of God, and forsaking Christ, and neglecting their souls at his persuasion. If they had served Christ as faithfully as they did Satan, he would have given them a better reward. It is also most just that they should be their own tormentors, that they may see their whole destruction is of themselves; and then whom can they complain of but themselves?

SECT. XIV. 6. Consider also that their torment will be universal. As all parts have joined in sin, so must they all partake in the torment. The soul, as it was the chief in sinning, shall be the chief in suffering; and as it is of a more excellent nature than the body, so will its torments far exceed bodily tor-

hell take hold upon them with tury. LHC DOU also bear its part. The body which was so car looked to, so tenderly cherished, so curiously dr what must it now endure! How are its ha looks now taken down! How little will those regard its comeliness and beauty! Those eyes were wont to be delighted with curious sights then see nothing but what shall terrify then angry God above them, with those saints who scorned enjoying the glory which they hav and about them will be only devils and damned How will they look back, and say, "Are a feasts, and games, and revels, come to this? ears which were accustomed to music and shall hear the shrieks and cries of their damne panions; children crying out against their p that gave them encouragement and example husbands and wives, masters and servants, m and people, magistrates and subjects, chargir misery upon one another, for discouraging i couniving at sin, and being silent, when they

WHO LOSE THE SAINTS' REST.

you that you shall lie in hell? It is no such mat God is more merciful. Or if there be a hell, w need you fear it? Are not you Christians? not the blood of Christ shed for you?" Thus as t Spirit of Christ is the comforter of the saints, Satan is the comforter of the wicked. Never was thief more careful, lest he should awake the people when he is robbing the house, than Satan is not awaken a sinner. But when the sinner is dead, the Satan hath done flattering and comforting. Whi way then will the forlorn sinner look for comfor They that drew him into the snare, and promis him safety, now forsake him, and are forsaken then selves. His comforts are gone, and the righteo God, whose forewarnings he made light of, will no make good his word against him to the least tittle.

SECT. XVI. 8. But the greatest aggravation these torments, will be their eternity. When thousand millions of ages are past, they are as fre to begin as the first day. If there were any hope an end, it would ease the damned to foresee it, b for ever is an intolerable thought. They were nev weary of sinning, nor will God be weary of punis They never heartily repented of sin, nor w God repent of their suffering. They broke the lav of the eternal God, and therefore shall suffer etern punishment. They knew it was an everlasting kin dom which they refused, and what wonder if the are everlastingly shut out of it? Their immort souls were guilty of the trespass, and therefore me immortally suffer the pains. What happy men wou they think themselves, if they might have lain st in their graves, or might but there lie down again How will they call and cry: "O death, whither a thou now gone? Now come, and cut off this dolet life O that these pains would break my heart.

ments! What difference is there betwixt the length of their pleasures and their pains! the one continued but a moment, the other endureth through all eternity. Sinner, remember how time is almost gone. Thou art standing at the door of eternity; and death is waiting to open the door, and put thee in. Go, sleep out a few more nights, and stir about a few more days on earth, and then thy nights and days shall end; thy thoughts, and cares, and pleasures, shall all be devoured by eternity; thou must enter upon the state which shall never be changed. As the joys of heaven are beyond our conception, so are the pains of hell. Everlasting torment is incon-

ceivable torment. SECT. XVII. But methinks I see the obstinate sinner desperately resolving, "If I must be damned, there is no remedy: rather than I will live as the Scripture requires, I will put it to the venture ; I shall escape as well as the rest of my neighbours, and we will even bear it as well as we can." Alas! poor creature, let me beg this of thee, before that thou dost so flatly resolve, that thou wouldst lend me thy attention to a few questions, and weigh them with the reason of a man. Who art thou, that thou shouldst bear the wrath of God? art thou a god or a man? what is thy strength? is it not as the strength of wax or stubble to resist the fire; or as chaff to the wind, or as dust before the fierce whirlwind? If thy strength were as iron, and thy bones as brass; if thy foundation were as the earth, and thy power as the heavens; yet shouldst thou perish at the breath of his indignation. How much more when thou art but a piece of breathing clay, kept a few days from being eaten with worms by the mere support and fayour of him whom thou art thus resisting! Why dost thou tremble at the signs of Almighty power and wrath? at claps of thunder; or flashes of lightning; or that unseen power which rends in pieces he mighty oaks, and tears down the strongest buildor at the plague when it rages around thee? thou hadst seen the plagues of Egypt, or the earth

wallow up Dathan and Abiram, or Elijah bring fire rom heaven to destroy the captains and their comanies, would not any of these sights have daunted hy spirits? How then canst thou bear the plagues of hell? Why art thou dismayed with such small sufferings as befal thee here? a tooth-ache, a fit of he gout or stone, the loss of a limb, or falling into beggary and disgrace? And yet all these laid torether will be one day accounted a happy state, in comparison of that which is suffered in hell. Why loes the approach of death so much affright thee?) how cold it strikes to thy heart! and would not he grave be accounted a paradise compared with hat place of torment which thou slightest? Is it an ntolerable thing to burn part of thy body, by holdng it in the fire? what then will it be to suffer ten housand times more for ever in hell? Why does he thought or mention of hell occasion any disquiet n thy spirit? and canst thou endure the terments hemselves? Why doth the rich man complain to Abraham of his torments in hell? or thy dying companions lose their courage and change their haughty anguage? Why cannot these make as light of hell s thyself? Didst thou never see or speak with a nan under despair? how uncomfortable was his talk, tow burdensome his life! nothing he possessed did im good; he had no sweetness in meat or drink; he sight of friends troubled him; he was weary of ife, and fearful of death. If the misery of the damued an be endured, why cannot a man more easily enure these foretastes of hell? What if thou shouldst ee the devil appear to thee in some terrible shape; rould not thy heart fail thee, and thy hair stand on n end? and how wilt thou endure to live for ever, there thou shalt have no other company but devils nd the damned and shalt not only see them, but

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. And on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Surely, if any one could have borne these sufferings easily, it would have been Jesus Christ. He had another measure of strength to bear it than thou hast. Woe to the sinner for thy mad security! Dost thou think to find it tolerable to thee, which was so heavy to Christ? Nay, the Son of God is cast into a bitter agony and bloody sweat, only under the "curse of the law," and yet thou, feeble, foolish creature, makest nothing to bear also the curse of the Gospel, which requires a "much sorer punishment," Heb. x. 29. The good Lord bring thee to thy right mind by repentance, lest thou buy thy wit at too dear a rate!

SECT. XVIII. And now, reader, I demand thy resolution! What use wilt thou make of all this? Shall it be lost to thee? or wilt thou consider it in good carnest? Thou hast cast away many a warning of God; wilt thou do so by this also? Take heed, God will not always stand warning and threatening. The hand of revenge is lifted up, the blow is coming, and woe to him on whom it lighteth! Dost thou throw away the book, and say, it speaks of nothing but hell and damnation? thus thou usest also to complain of the preacher. But wouldst thou not have us tell thee of these things? should we be. guilty of the blood of thy soul, by keeping silent that which God hath charged us to make known? wouldst thou perish in ease and silence, and have us to perish with thee, rather than displease thee by speaking the truth? If thou wilt be guilty of such inhuman cruelty, God forbid we should be guilty of such sottish folly. This kind of preaching or writing is the ready way to be hated; and the desire of applause is so natural, that few delight in such a displeasing way. But consider, Are these things true, or are they not? If they were not true, I would heartily join with thee against any that fright people without a cause. But if these threatenings be the word of God, what

a wretch art thou that wilt not hear it, and consider

thee to seek them, and not reject them; as preaching hell is but to persuade thee to avoid If thou wert quite past hope of escaping it, then were in vain to tell thee of hell; but as long as the art alive, there is hope of thy recovery, and then fore all means must be used to awake thee from tl lethargy. Alas! what heart can now possibly co ceive, or what tongue express, the pains of the souls that are under the wrath of God! Then, si ners, you will be crying to Jesus Christ, "O merc O pity, pity on a poor soul!" Why, I do now, in t name of the Lord Jesus, cry to thee, "O have mere have pity, man, upon thy own soul!" Shall God pi thee, who will not be entreated to pity thyself? thy horse see but a pit before him, thou canst scarce force him in; and wilt thou so obstinately cast th self into hell, when the danger is foretold the "Who can stand before the indignation of the Lore and who can abide the fierceness of his anger' Nahum i. 6. Methinks thou shouldst need t more words, but presently cast away thy soul-dan: ing sins, and wholly deliver up thyself to Chri-Resolve on it immediately, and let it be done, that may see thy face in rest among the saints. May t Lord persuade thy heart to strike this covena without any longer delay! But if thou be harden unto death, and there be no remedy, yet say n another day but that thou wast faithfully warne

and hadst a friend that would fain have prevent

thy damnation.

Preaching heaven and mercy to thee, is entreating

CHAPTER VII.

THE NECESSITY OF DILIGENTLY SEEKING THE SAINTS' REST.

incr I. The saints' rest surprisingly neglected particularly, Szcr. II. By the worldly-minded; Szcr. III. The profine multitude, Szcr. IV. Furmal professors; Szcr. V.—VIII. And by the godly themselves, whether magistrates, ministers, or people; by some. IX. The author mourns the neglect, and excites the reader to diligence, by some the neglect, and excites the reader to diligence, by some interest of the second of the

SECT. I. If there be so certain and glorious a rest for the saints, why is there no more industrious seeking after it? One would think, if a man did but once hear of such unspeakable glory to be obtained, and believed what he heard to be true, he should be transported with the vehemency of his desire after it, and should almost forget to eat and drink, and should care for nothing else, and speak of and inquire after nothing else, but how to get this treasure. And yet people who hear of it daily, and profess to believe it as a fundamental article of their faith, do as little mind it or labour for it, as if they had never heard of any such thing, or did not believe one word they hear. This reproof is more particularly applicable to the worldly-minded,—the profane multitude,—the formal professors, and even to the godly themselves.

SECT. II. The worldly-minded are so taken up in

they neglect the kingly dignity of the saints! What insatiable pursuit of fleshly pleasures, while they look on the praises of God, the joy of angels, as a tiresome burden! What unweared diligence in raising their posterity, enlarging their possessions, (perhaps for a poor living from hand to mouth.) while judgment is drawing near; but how it shall go with them, never puts them to one hour's consideration! What rising early, and sitting up late, and labouring from year to year, to maintain themselves and children in credit till they die; but what shall follow after they never think on! Yet these men cry, "May we not be saved without so much ado?" How early do they rouse up their servants to their labour: but how seldom do they

call them to prayer or reading the Scriptures. What hath this world done for its lovers and friends, that it is so esgerty followed, and painfully sought after, while Christ and heaven stand by, and few regard them? Or what will the world do for them for the time to come? The common entrance into it is through anguish and sorrow. The passage through it is with continual care and labour. The passage out of it is the sharpest of all. O unreasonable bewitched men! will mirth and pleasure stick close to work and the story of the story o

our of more worth than eternal rest? And will the recompanse the loss of that enduring treasure? Ca there be the least hope of any of these? Ah, vile de ceitful world! how oft have we heard thy most faithful servants at last complaining: "Oh, the world hat deceived me, and undone me! It flattered me in m prosperity, but now it turns me off in my necessity If I had as faithfully served Christ, as I have serve it, he would not have left me thus comfortless an hopeless." Thus they complain; and yet succeedin sinners will take no warning.

sinners will take no warning. SECT. III. As for the profane multitude, they wi not be persuaded to be at so much pains for salvation as to perform the common outward duties of religior If they have the Gospel preached in the town wher they dwell, it may be they will give the hearing to one part of the day, and stay at home the other; o if the master come to the congregation, yet part (his family must stay at home. If they want the plai and powerful preaching of the Gospel, how few ar there in a whole town who will travel a mile or tw to hear abroad; though they will go many miles t the market for provision for their bodies! The know the Scripture is the law of God, by which the must be acquitted or condemned in judgment; an that the man is blessed who delights in the law the Lord, and in his law doth meditate day an night: yet will they not be at pains to read a chapte once a day. If they carry a Bible to church, an neglect it all the week, this is the most use the make of it. Though they are commanded to pra without ceasing, and to pray always: yet they wi neither pray constantly in their families, nor i secret. Though Daniel would rather be cast to the lior than forbear praying three times a-day in his house

where his enemies might hear him; yet these me
will rather venture to be an eternal prey to Satar
the roaring lion, than thus seek their own safet
(Ir their cold and heartless prayers invite God to
denial; for among men it is taken for granted, to
who asks but slightly and seldom, cares not u

they judge themselves unworthy even, who think it is not worth their more constant and carnest requests. If every door was marked. where families do not morning and evening earnestly seek the Lord in prayer, that his wrath might be poured out upon such prayerless families, our towns would be as places overthrown by the plague, the people being dead within, and the mark of judgment without. I fear, where one house would escape, ten would be marked out for death; and then they might teach their doors to pray, "Lord have mercy upon us," because the people would not pray them-selves. But especially if we could see what men do in their secret chambers, how few would you find in a whole town that spend one quarter of an hour, morning and night, in earnest supplication to God for their souls! O how little do these men set by eternal rest! Thus do they slothfully neglect all endeavours for their own welfare, except some public duty in the congregation, which custom or credit engages them to. Persuade them to read good books, learn the grounds of religion in their catechism, and sanctify the Lord's day in prayer and meditation, and hearing the word, and forbearing all worldly thoughts and speeches; and what a tedious life do they take

doing so much for.

**BEUT. IV. Another sort are formal professors, who will be brought to an outward duty; but to the inward work of religion they will never be persuaded. They will preach, or hear, or read, or talk of heaven, or pray in their families, and take part with the persons or causes that are good, and desired to be esteemed among the godly; but you can never bring them to the more spiritual duties; as, to be constant and fermant in secret prayer and meditation; conscientious in self-examination; heavenly-minded; to watch over their hearts, words, and ways; to mortify the fissh and not make provision to fulfil its lusts; to love at least of the state of the stat

this to be! as if they thought heaven were not worth

1 et of Christ, and prize his service and favour before all; to prepare to die, and willingly leave all to go to brist. Hypocrites will never be persuaded to any of times. If any hypocrite entertains the Gospel with joy, it is only in the surface of his soul; he never gives the ared any depth of earth; it changes his opinion, but never melts and new-moulds his heart, nor sets up Ultrist there in full power and authority. As his religion lies most in opinion, so does his chief business and conversation. He is usually an ignorant, bold, controlled dealer in controversies, rather than an humlike embracer of known truth, with love and obedience. By his slighting the judgments and persons of others, and seldom talking with seriousness and humility of the great things of Christ, he shows his religion dwells in the brain, and not in his heart. The wind of temptation carries him away as a feather, because his heart is not established with Christ and grace. He never in private conversation humbly bewalls his soul's imperfections, or tenderly acknowledges his unkindness to Christ; but gathers his greatout comforts from his being of such a judgment or party. The like may be said of the worldly hypocrita, who chokes the Gospel with the thorns of worldly cares and desires. He is convinced that he must be religious, or he cannot be saved; and therefore he reads, and hears, and prays, and forsakes his former company and courses; but he resolves to keep his hold of present things. His judgment may say, (ind is the chief good; but his heart and affections never said so. The world hath more of his affections than God, and therefore it is his god. Though he does not run after opinions and novelties, like the former, yet he will be of that opinion which will best serve his worldly advantage. And as one whose spirits are enfeebled by some pestilential disease; so this man's spirits being possessed by the plague of a worldly dispusition, how feeble is he in secret prayer! how ""porticial in examination and meditation! how por in heart-watchings! how nothing at all in loving ? walking with God, rejoicing in him, or desiring

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So that both these, and many other sorts of hypocrites, though they will go with you in the easy outside of religion, yet will never be at the pains of inward and spiritual duties.

SECT. V. And even the godly themselves are too

lazy seekers of their everlasting rest. Alas! what a disproportion is there between our light and heat! our profession and prosecution! Who makes that haste as if it were for heaven? How still we stand! how idly we work! how we talk, and jest, and trifle away our time! how deceitfully we perform the work of God! how we hear, as if we heard not! and pray as if we prayed not! and examine, and meditate, and reprove sin, as if we did it not! and enjoy Christ as if we enjoyed him not! as if we had learned to use the things of heaven, as the apostle teacheth us to use the things of the world! What a frozen stupidity has benumbed us! we are dying, and we know it, and vet we stir not: we are at the door of eternal happiness or misery, and yet we perceive it not; death knocks, and we hear it not; God and Christ call and cry to us, "To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts: work while it is day, for the night cometh when none can work: now ply your business, labour for your lives, lay out all your strength and time: now or never!" and yet we stir no more than if we were half asleep. What haste do death and judgment make! how fast do they come on! they are almost at us, and yet what little haste we make! Lord, what a senseless, earthly, hellish thing, is a hard heart! Where is the man that is in earnest a Christian! Methinks men everywhere make but a trifle of their eternal state. They look after it but a little by the bye; they do not make it the business of their lives. If I were not sick myself of the same disease, with what tears should I mix this ink! with what groams should I express these complaints! and with what heart grief should I mourn over this universal deadness! SECT. VI. Do magistrates among us seriously perform their work? are they zealous for God? do the

build up his house? are they tender of his honour

do they second the world? and fly in the face of sin and sinners, as the disturbers of our peace, and the only cause of all our miseries? Do they improve all their power, wealth, and honour, and all their influence, for the greatest advantage to the kingdom of Christ, as men that must shortly give an account of their stewardship?

SECT. VII. How then are those ministers that are serious in their work! nay, how mightily do the very best fail in this! Do we cry out of men's disobedience to the Gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit, and deal with sin as the destroying fire in our towns, and by force pull men out of it? Do we persuade people, as those should that know the terrors of the Lord? Do we press Christ, and regeneration, and faith, and holiness, believing that, without these men can never have life? Do our bowels yearn over the ignorant, careless, and obstinate multitude? When we look them in the face, do our hearts melt over them, lest we should never see their faces in rest? Do we, as Paul, tell them, weeping, of their fleshly and earthly disposition? and teach them publicly, and from house to house, at all seasons, and with many tears? and do we entreat them, as for their soul's salvation? Or rather, do we not study to gain the approbation of critical hearers; as if a minister's business were of no more weight but to tell a smooth tale for an hour, and look no more after the people till the next sermon? Does not carnal prudence control our fervour, and make our discourses lifeless, on subjects the most piercing? How gently do we handle those sins, which will so cruelly handle our people's souls! In a word, our want of seriousness about the things of heaven, charms the souls of men into formality, and brings them to this customary careless hearing, which undoes them. May the Lord pardon the great sin of the ministry in this thing! and, in particular, my

SECT. VIII. And are the people more serious than might rates or ministers? How can it be expected?

conscience, and super it to ten thee truly. Hast thou set thy eternal rest before thine eyes as the great business thou hast to do in this world? Hast thou watched and laboured with all thy might, that no man take thy crown? Hast thou made haste. lest thou shouldst come too late, and die before thy work be done? Hast thou pressed on through crowds of opposition towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, still reaching forth unto those things which are before? Can conscience witness your secret cries, and groans, and tears? Can your family witness that you taught

them the fear of the Lord, and warned them not to go to that place of torment? Can your minister witness that he has heard you cry out, "What shall I do to be saved?" and that you have follow-ed him with complaints against your corruptions, and with earnest inquiries after the Lord? Can

your neighbours about you witness that you reprove the ungodly, and take pains to save the souls of your brethren? Let all these witnesses judge this day

> about eternal rest. You can tell by his work, whether your servant has loitered, though you did not see him; so you may by looking at your own work. Is your love to Christ, your faith, your zeal, and other graces, strong or weak? What are your joys? What is your assurance? Is all in order with you? Are you ready to die, if this should be the day? Do the souls, among whom you have conversed, bless you? Judge by this, and it will quickly appear whether

Sect. IX. O blessed rest, how unworthily art thou neglected! O glorious kingdom, how art thou undervalued! Little know the careless sons of men, what a state they set so light by. If they once knew it, they would surely be of another mind. I hope thou, reader, art sensible, what a desperate thing it is to trifle about eternal rest; and how deeply thou

you have been labourers or loiterers.

between God and you, whether you are in earnest

thou wilt not now suffer this conviction to die. Should the physician tell thee, " If you will observe but one thing, I doubt not to cure your disease:" wouldst thou not observe it? So I tell thee, if thou wilt observe but this one thing for thy soul, I make no doubt of thy salvation; shake off thy sloth, and put to all thy strength, and be a Christian indeed; I know not then what can hinder thy happiness. As far as thou art gone from God, seek him with all thy heart, and no doubt thou shalt find him. As unkind as thou hast been to Jesus Christ, seek him heartily, obey him unreservedly, and thy salvation is as sure as if thou hadst it already. But full as Christ's satisfaction is, free as the promise is, large as the mercy of God is, if thou only talk of these, when thou shouldst eagerly entertain them, thou wilt be never the better for them: and if thou loiter, when thou shouldst labour, thou wilt lose the crown. Fall to work then speedily and seriously, and bless God that thou hast yet time to do it. And to show that I urge thee not without cause, I will here add a variety of animating considerations. Rouse up thy spirit, and, as Moses said to Israel, "set thy heart unto all the words which I testify unto thee this day; for it is not a vain thing, because it is your life, xxxii. 46, 47. May the Lord open thy heart, and fasten his counsel effectually upon thee.

SECT. X. Consider how reasonable it is, that our diligence should be answerable to the ends we aim at, to the work we have to do, to the shortness and uncertainty of our time, and to the contrary diligence of our enemies. The ends of a Christain's desires and endeavours are so great, that no human understanding on earth can comprehend them. What is so excellent, so important, or so necessary, as the glorifying of God, the salvation of our own and other men's souls, by escaping the torments of hell, and possessing the glory of heaven? And can a man be on much affected with things of such moment? Can edesire them too earnestly, or love them too strong-or labour for them too diligently? Do not we

SEEKING THE SAINTS' REST.

know, that if our prayers prevail not, and or succeed not, we are undone for ever? The

a Christian here is very great and various. must be renewed; corruptions must be mo. custom, temptations, and worldly interests. be conquered; flesh must be subdued; life, fr and credit, must be slighted; conscience, on grounds be quieted; and assurance of pardon salvation attained. Though God must give us without our merit, yet he will not give them wit our earnest seeking and labour. Besides, ther much knowledge to be got, many ordinances to used, and duties to be performed; every age, ye and day; every place we come to; every person deal with; every change of our condition; still quire the renewing of our labour: wives, childre servants, neighbours, friends, enemies, all of them ca for duty from us. Judge, then, whether men that hav so much business lying upon their hands should no exert themselves; and whether it be their wisdon either to delay or loiter .- Time passes on. Yet a few days, and we shall be here no more. Many diseases are ready to assault us. We, that are now preaching, and hearing, and talking, and walking, must very shortly be carried, and laid in the dust, and then 'eft to the worms in darkness and corruption; we are dmost there already; we know not whether we shall ave another sermon, or Sabbath, or hour. How ctive should they be, who know they have so short space for so great a work! And we have enemies at are always plotting and labouring for our desaction. How diligent is Satan in all kind of tempions? Therefore, "be sober, be vigilant; because ir adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh ut, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resi fast in the faith," 1 Pet. v. 8 Il the ministers acre

SECT. XI. It should excite us to diligence, wi we consider our talents, and our mercies, our relat to God, and the afflictions he lays upon us. I talents which we have received are many and gre What people breathing on earth have had plai instructions, or more forcible persuasions, or m constant admonitions, in season and out of season Sermons, till we have been weary of them; and S baths, till we have profaned them; excellent be in such plenty that we know not which to re What people have had God so near them? or he seen so much of Christ crucified before their eyes? have had heaven and hell so open unto them? W speed should such a people make for heaven! H should they fly, that are thus winged! And h swiftly should they sail that have wind and tide help them! A small measure of grace beseems such a people, nor will an ordinary diligence in work of God excuse them. All our lives have b filled with mercies. God hath mercifully poured upon us the riches of sea and land, of heaven a earth. We are fed and clothed with mercy. have mercies within and without. To number the is to count the stars or the sand on the sea-sho If there be any difference betwixt hell and earth, y or heaven and earth, then certainly we have receive mercy. If the blood of the Son of God be mer then we are engaged to God by mercy. Shall (think nothing too much, nor too good for us; and sl we think all to much that we do for him? Whe compare my slow and unprofitable life, with the: quent and wonderful mercies received, it shames 1 it silences me, and leaves me inexcusable. Besi our talents and mercies, our relations to God most endearing. Are we his children, and do we

owe him our most tender affections and dutiful of dience? Are we the spouse of Christ, and should not obey and love him? "If he be a father, when his honour? and if he be a master, where is his fundal, i. 6. "We call him master and Lord, at say well," John xiii. 13. But if our industry

answerable to our relations, we condemn ourselves in saying, we are his children, or his servants. How will the hard labour, and daily toil which servants undergo to please their masters, judge and condemn those who will not labour so hard for their great Master! Surely there is no master like him; nor can any servant expect such fruit of their labours as his servants. And if we wander out of God's way, or loiter in it, how is every creature ready to be his rod to reduce us, or put us on! Our sweetest mercies will become our sorrows. Rather than want a rod. the Lord will make us a scourge to ourselves: our diseased bodies shall make us groan; our perplexed minds shall make us restless; our conscience shall be as a scorpion in our bosom. And is it not easier to endure the labour than the spur? Had we rather be still afflicted, than be up and doing? And though they that do most meet also with afflictions; yet surely, according to their peace of conscience, and faithfulness to Christ, the bitterness of their cup is abated.

SECT. XII. To quicken our diligence in our work, we should also consider what assistances we have, what principles we profess, and our certainty that we can never do too much. For our assistance in the service of God, all the world are our servants. The sun, moon, and stars, attend us with their light and influence. The earth, with all its furniture of plants and flowers, fruits, birds, and beasts—the sea, with its inhabitants—the air, the wind, the frost and snow, the heat and fire, the clouds and rain, all wait upon us, while we do our work. Yea, "the angels are all our ministering spirits," Heb. i. 14. Nay, more, the patience of God doth wait upon us; the Lord Jesus Christ waiteth, in the offers of his blood; the Holy Spirit waiteth, by strivings with our backward hearts: besides the ministers of the Gospel, who study and vait, preach and wait, pray and wait upon careless inners. And is it not an intolerable crime for us to iffe, while angels and men, yea, the Lord himself nd by, and look on, and, as it were, hold us the

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candle while we do nothing? I beseech you, Chr tians, whenever you are praying, or reproving trar gressors, or upon any duty, remember what assi ances you have for your work, and then judge he you ought to perform it. The principles we profe are, that God is the chief good; that all our hap ness consists in his love, and therefore it should valued and sought above all things; that he is o enly Lord, and therefore chiefly to be served; the we must love him with all our heart, and soul, as strength; that our great business in the world is glorify God, and obtain salvation. Are these detrines seen in our practice? or, rather do not o works deny what our words confess? But howev our assistances and principles excite us to our wor

we are sure we can never do too much.

"do all, we are unprofitable servants," Luke xv 10; much more when we are sure to fail in all. I man can obey or serve God too much. Though superstition, or service of our own devising, may called a being righteous over much; yet as long we keep to the rule of the word, we can never I righteous too much. The world is mad with malic when they think that faithful diligence in the se vice of Christ is foolish singularity. The time near when they will easily confess, that God cou not be loved or served too much, and that no ms can be too busy to save his soul. We may easily of

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too much for the world, but cannot for God.

SECT. XIII. Let us farther consider that it
the nature of every grace to promote diligence, th
trifling in the way to heaven is lost labour, th
much precious time is already misspent, and that
proportion to our labour will be your recompene
See the nature and tendency of every grace. If yo
loved God, you would think nothing too much th
you could possibly do to serve him and please hi

you could possibly do to serve him and please hi still more. Love is quick and impatient, active a observant. If you love Christ, you would keep commandments, nor accuse them of too much st. If you had faith it would quicken and

courage you. If you had the hope of glory, it would, as the spring in the watch, set all the wheels of your souls a going. If you had the fear of God, it would rouse you out of your slothfulness. If you had zeal, it would inflame and eat you up. In what degree soever thou art sanctified, in the same degree thou wilt be serious and laborious in the work of God. But they that trifle lose their labour. Many who, like Agrippa, are but almost Christians, will find in the end they shall be but almost saved. If two be running in a race, he that runs slowest loses both prize and labour. A man that is lifting a weight, if he put not sufficient strength to it, had as good put none at all. How many duties have Christians lost, for want of doing them thoroughly! "Many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able," Luke xiii. 24, who, if they had striven, might have been able. Therefore put to a little more diligence and strength, that all you have done already be not in vain. Besides, is not much precious time already lost? With some of us childhood and youth are gone; with some their middle age also; and the time before us is very uncertain. What time have we slept, talked, and played away, or spent in worldly thoughts and cares? How little of our work is done? The time we have lost cannot be recalled; should we not then redeem and improve the little which remains? If a traveller sleep, or trifle most of the day, he must travel so much faster in the evening, or fall short of his journey's end. Doubt not but the recompence will be according to your labour. The seed which is buried and dead, will bring, forth a plentiful harvest. Whatever you do or suffer, everlasting rest will pay for all. There is no repenting of labours or suffer ings in heaven. There is not one says, "Would I had spared my pains, and prayed less, or been less strict, and done as the rest of my neighbours." On the contrary, it will be their joy to look back upor their labours and tribulations, and to consider how the mighty power of God brought them through We may all say, as I'aul "I reckon that the suf i,

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ings, and labows, of this present time, are not we thy to be compared with the glory which shall I revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. We labour but a moment, but we shall rest for ever. Who wou not put forth all his strength for one hour, when, if that hour's work he may be a prince while he lives "God is not unrighteous to forget our work as labour of love," Heb. vi. 10. Will not all our tea be wiped away, and all the sorrow of our duties I then forgotten.

then forgotten. SECT. XIV. Nor does it less deserve to be co sidered that striving is the divinely appointed way salvation, that all men either do or will approve that the best Christians at death lament their neg gence, and that heaven itself is often lost for want striving, but is never had on easier terms. The s vereign wisdom of God has made striving necessa: to salvation. Who knows the way to heaven bett than the God of heaven? When men tell us, we a too strict, whom do they accuse? God or us? If were a fault, it would lie in him that commands, as not in us who obey. These are the men that ask t whether we are wiser than all the world besides? as yet they will pretend to be wiser than God. Ho can they reconcile their language with the laws God? "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force," Matt. xi. 1 "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for man will seek to enter in, and shall not be able," Lul xiii. 24. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with thy might; for there is no work, nor device nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whith thou goest," Eccles. ix. 10. "Work out your ov salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 1 "Give diligence to make your calling and election

"Give diligence to make your calling and elections ore," 2 Pet. i. 10. "If the righteous scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinn appear?" 1 Pet. iv. 18. Let them bring all to seeming reasons they can against the holy viole of the saints; this sufficeth me to confute them that God is of another mind, and he hath comme

me to do much more than I do: and though I could see no other reason for it, his will is reason enough. Who should make laws for us, but he that made us? and who should point out the way to heaven, but he that must bring us thither? and who should fix the terms of salvation, but he that bestows the gift of salvation? So that let the world, the flesh, or the devil, speak against a holy laborious life, this is my answer, God hath commanded it. Nay, there never was, nor ever will be a man, but will approve such a life, and will one day justify the diligence of the saints. And who would not go that way which every man shall finally applaud? True, it is now a way everywhere spoken against; but let me tell you, most that speak against it, in their judgments approve of it: and those that are now against it, will shortly be of another mind. If they come to heaven, their mind must be changed before they come there; if they go to hell, their judgment will then be altered, whether they will or not. Remember this, you that love the opinion and way of the multitude; why then will you not be of the opinion that all will be of; Why will you be of a judgment which you are sure all of you shortly to change? O that you were but as wise in this, as those in hell!—Even the best of Christians, when they come to die, exceedingly lament their negligence. They then wish, "O that I had been a thousand times more holy, more heavenly, more laborious for my soul! The world accuses me for doing too much, but my own conscience accuses me for doing too little. It is far easier bearing the scoffs of the world, than the lashes of conscience. I had rather be reproached by the devil for seeking salvation, than reproved of God for neglecting it. How do their failings thus wound and disquiet them, who have been the wonders of the world for their heavenly conversation! It is for want of more diligence, that heaven itself is often lost.—When they that "have heard the word, and anon with joy re ceived it, and have done many things, and hear the ministers of Christ gladly," Matt. xiii. 20; have

vi. 20, shall yet perish; should not this rouse us out of our security? How far hath many a man followed Christ, and yet forsook him, when all worldly interests and hopes were to be renounced! God hath resolved, that heaven shall not be had on easier terms. Rest must always follow labour. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. Seriousness is the very thing wherein consists our sincerity. If thou art not serious, thou art not a Christian. It is not only a high degree in Christianity, but the very life and essence of it. As fencers upon a stage differ from soldiers fighting for their lives; so hypocrites differ from serious Christians. If men could be saved without this serious diligence, they would never regard it: all the excellencies of God's ways would never entice them. But when God hath resolved, that without serious diligence here, you shall not rest hereafter, is it not wisdom to exert ourselves to the utmost?

SECT. XV. But to persuade thee, if possible, reader, to be serious in thy endeavours for heaven, let me add more considerations. As, for instance, consider, God is in earnest with you, and why should you not be so with him? In his commands, his threatenings, his promises, he means as he speaks. In his judgments he is serious. Was he not so when he drowned the world? when he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah? and when he scattered the Jews? Is it time, then, to trifle with God? Jesus Christ was serious in purchasing our redemption. In teaching he neglected his meat and drink; in prayer he continued all night; in doing good his friends thought him beside himself; in suffering he fasted forty days, was tempted, betrayed, spit upon, buffeted, crowned with thorns, sweat drops of blood; was crucified, pierced, died. There was no jesting in all this. And should we not be serious in seeking our own salvation? The Holy Spirit is serious in soliciting us to be happy. His motions are frequent, pressing, and importunate. He striveth with He is grieved when we resist him. And shou

..... aign, anu puis eve The next time thou art ____ thou wilt beg for a serious regard of the prayers. And shall we expect real mercies when v are slight and superficial in the work of God. Th ministers of Christ are serious in exhorting an instructing you. They beg of God and of you, and long more for the salvation of your souls than for any worldly good. If they kill themselves with their labour, or suffer martyrdom for preaching the Gospel, they think their lives are well bestowed, so that they prevail for the saving of your souls. And shall other men be so painful and careful for your salvation, and you be so careless and negligent of your own? How diligent and serious are all the creatures in serving you! What haste makes the sun to compass the world! The fountains are always flowing for thy use; the rivers still running; spring and harvest keep their times. How hard does thy ox labour for thee from day to day! How speedily does thy horse travel with thee! And shalf the only be negligent? Shall all these serving thee, and the

piercing thoughts wilt thou mave of hinks I foresee thee already astonished to think how :hou couldst possibly make so light of these things. Methinks I even hear thee crying out of thy stupidity and madness. SECT. XVI. And now, reader, having laid down these undeniable arguments, I do, in the name of God, demand thy resolution. Wilt thou yield obedience or not. I am confident thy conscience is convinced of thy duty. Darest thou now go on in thy common, careless course, against the plain evi-dence of reason and commands of God, and against the light of thy own conscience? Darest thou live as loosely, sin as boldly, and pray as seldom as before? Darest thou profane the Sabbath, slight the service of God, and think of thine everlasting state. as carelessly as before. Or dost thou not rather resolve to gird up the loins of thy mind, and set thy-

self wholly to the work of thy salvation, and break through the oppositions, and slight the scoffs and pursuentions of the world, and lay aside every weight,

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what lives would you lead, and what pains would you take in the service of God? And is not the saints' rest a more excellent happiness than all this? If it were felony to break the Sabbath, neglect secret or family worship, or be loose in your lives; what manner of persons would you then be? And is not eternal death more terrible than temporal? If God usually punished with some present judgment every act of sin, as he did the lie of Ananias and Sapphira; what kind of lives would you lead? And is not eternal wrath far more terrible? If one of your acquaintance should come from the dead, and tell you that he suffered the torments of hell for those sins you are guilty of; what manner of persons would you afterwards be? How much more should the warnings of God affright you? If you knew that this were the last day you had to live in the world, how would you spend it? And you know not but it may be your last, and are sure your last is near. If you had seen the general dissolution of the world, and all the pomp and glory of it consumed to ashes; what would such a sight persuade thee to do? Such a sight you shall certainly see. If you had seen the judgment-seat, and the books opened, and the wicked stand trembling on the left hand of the judge, and the godly rejoicing on the right hand, and their different sentences pronounced; what persons would you have been after such a sight? This sight you shall one day surely see. If you had seen hell open, and all the damned there in their ceaseless torments; also heaven opened, as Stephen did, and all the saints there triumphing in glory; what a life would you lead after such sights! These you will see before it be long. If you had laid in hell but one year, or one day, or hour, and there felt the torments you now hear of; how seriously would you then speak of hell, and pray against it. And will you not take God's word for the truth of this, except you feel it? Or if you had possessed the glory of heaven but one year; what pains would you take, rather than be deprived of such incomparable glory? Thus

have said enough, if not to stir up the sinner to a serious working out his salvation, yet at least to silence him, and leave him inexcusable at the judgment of God: only as we do by our friends when they are dead, and our words and actions can do them no good, yet to testify our affection for them, we weep and mourn; so will I also do for these unhappy souls. It makes my heart tremble, to think how they will stand before the Lord, confounded and speechless! when he shall say, " Was the world, or Satan, a better friend to you than I? or had they done for you more than I had done? Try now whether they will save you, or recompense you for the loss of heaven, or be as good to you as I would have been." What will the wretched sinner answer to any of this? But though man will not hear, we may hope in speaking to God. "O thou that didst weep and groan in spirit over a dead Lazarus, pity these dead and senseless souls, till they are able to weep and groan in pity to themselves! As thou hast bid thy servant speak, so speak now thyself; they will hear thy voice speaking to their hearts, who will not hear mine speaking to their ears. Lord, thou hast long knocked at these hearts in vain; now break the doors, and enter in!"

SECT. XVII. Yet to show the godly why they, above all men should be laborious for heaven, I desire to ask them, What manner of persons should they be, whom God hath chosen to be vessels of mercy? who have felt the smart of their negligence in their new birth, in their troubles of conscience, in their doubts and fears, and in other sharp afflictions? who have often confessed their sins of negligence to God in prayer? who have bound themselves to God by so many covenants? What manner of persons should they be, who are near to God as the children of his family? who have tasted such sweetness in diligent obedience? who are many of them so uncertain what shall everlastingly become of their souls? What manner of persons should they be in holiness, whose sanctification is so imperfect? whose lives and

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW TO DISCERN OUR TITLE TO THE SAINTS' R Sect. I. The folly of men in not inquiring after a title to the rest; Sept. II. And their cause for terror as long as they are defect of a 10th. Sept. III. And their cause for terror as long as they are defect of a 10th. Sept. III. Sept. III.

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SECT. I. Is there such a glorious rest so near a hand; and shall none enjoy it but the people of What mean most of the world then, to live so contentedly without assurance of their interests in this rest, and neglect the trying of their title to it, when the Lord hath so fully opened the blessedness of that kingdom, which none but obedient believers shall possess; and so fully expressed those torments which the rest of the world must eternally suffermethinks they that believe this to be certainly trus should never be at any quiet in themselves till the were fully assured of their being heirs of the king. Lord, what a strange madness is this, men who know they must presently enter upon

changeable joy or pain, should yet live as uncertain what shall be their doom, as if they had never heard of any such state; yea, and live as quietly and merrily in this uncertainty, as if all were made sure, and there were no danger! Are these men alive or dead? Are they awake or asleep? What do they think on? Where are their hearts? If they have but a weighty suit at law, how careful are they to know whether it will go for or against them! If they were to be tried for their lives at an earthly bar, how careful would they be to know whether they should be saved or condemned, especially if their care might surely save them! If they be dangerously sick, they will inquire of the physician, What, think you, sir, shall I escape or not? But in the business of their salvation, they are content to be uncertain. If you ask most men a reason of the hope that is in them, they will say, "because God is merciful, and Christ died for sinners," and the like general reasons, which any man in the world may give as well as they: but put them to prove their interest in Christ, and in the saving mercy of God, and they can say nothing to the purpose. If God or man should say to them, What case is thy soul in, man? Is it regenerate, sanctified, and pardoned, or not? He would say, as Cain of Abel, "I know not: am I my soul's keeper? I hope well; I trust God with my soul; I shall speed as well as other men do: I thank God, I never made any doubt of my salvation." Thou hast cause to doubt, because thou never didst doubt; and yet more because thou hast been so careless in thy confidence. What do thy expressions discover, but a wilful neglect of thy own salvation? As a ship-master that should let his vessel alone, and say, "I will venture it among the rocks, and waves, and winds; I will trust God with it; it will speed as well as other vessels." What horrible abuse of God is this to pretend to trust God, to cloak their own wilful negligence! If thou didst really trust God, thou wouldst also be ruled by him, and trust him in his own appointed way. He requires thee to "give diligence to mak thy calling and election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10, and so trust him. He hath marked thee out a way in Scripture, by which thou art charged to search and try thyself, and mayest arrive at certainty. Were he not a foolish traveller, that would hold on his way, when he does not know whether he be right or wrong? and say, "I hope I am right; I will go on and trust in God?" Art thou not guilty of this folly in thy travels to eternity? Not considering that a little serious inquiry, whether thy way be right, might save thee a great deal of labour, which thou bestowest in vain, and must undo again, or else thou wilt miss of salvation, and undo thyself.

SECT. II. How canst thou think or speak of the great God without terror, as long as thou art uncertain whether he be thy father or thy enemy, and knowest not but all his perfections may be employed against thee? or of Jesus Christ, when thou knowest not whether his blood hath purged thy soul; whether he will condemn or acquit thee in judgment; or whether he be the foundation of thy happiness, or a stone of stumbling to break thee and grind thee to powder? How canst thou open the Bible, and read a chapter, but it should terrify thee? Methinks every leaf should be to thee as Belshazzar's writing on the wall, except only that which draws thee to try and reform. If thou readest the promises, thou knowest not whether they shall be fulfilled to thee. If thou readest the threatenings, for any thing thou knowest, thou readest thy own sentence. No wonder thou art an enemy to plain preaching, and say of the minister, as Abab of the prophet, I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. How canst thou without terror join in prayer? When thou receivest the sacrament, thou knowest not whether it be thy bane or bliss. What comfort canst thou find in thy friends, and honours, and houses, and lands, till thou knowest thou hast the love of God with them, and shalt have rest with him when thou leavest them. Offer a prisoner, before he knows his sentence, either music, or clothes, or pr

ferment; what are they to him, till he knows he shall escape with his life? for if he knows he must die the next day, it will be a small comfort to die rich or honourable. Methinks it should be so with thee, till thou knowest thy eternal state. When thou liest down to take thy rest, methinks the uncertainty of thy salvation should keep thee waking, or amaze thee in thy dreams, and trouble thy sleep. Doth it not grieve thee to see the people of God so comfortable in their way to glory, when thou hast no good hope of ever enjoying it thyself? How canst thou think of thy dying hour? Thou knowest it is near, and there is no avoiding it, nor any medicine found out that can prevent it. If thou shouldst die this day, (and who knows what a day may bring forth?) thou art not certain whether thou shalt go to heaven or hell. And canst thou be merry, till thou art got out of this dangerous state? What shift dost thou make to preserve thy heart from horror, when thou rememberest the great judgment-day, and everlasting flames? When thou hearest of it, dost thou not tremble, as Felix? If the keepers shook, and became as dead men, when they saw the angel come and roll back the stone from Christ's sepulchre; how canst thou think of living in hell with devils, till thou hast some well-grounded assurance that thou shalt escape it? Thy bed is very soft, or thy heart is very hard, if thou canst sleep soundly in this uncertain case.

about their salvation were remediless, then it must be borne as other unavoidable miseries. But, alas! the common cause is wilful negligence. Men will not be persuaded to use the remedy. The great means to conquer this uncertainty is self-examination, or the serious and diligent trying of a man's heart and state by the rule of Scripture. Either men understand not the nature and use of this duty, or else they will not be at the pains to try. Go through a congregation of a thousand men, and how few of them shall you meet with, that ever bestowed one hour in all their lives in a close examination of their title tr

SECT. III. If this general uncertainty of the world

heaven! Ask thy own conscience, reader, when was the time and where was the place, that ever thou solumnly tookest thy heart to task, as in the sight of Gal, and didst examine it by Scripture, whether it be renewed or not? whether it be holy or not? whether it be set most on God, or the creatures, on heaven or earth? And when didst thou follow on this mination till thou hadst discovered thy condition, passed sentence on thyself accordingly? But because this is a work of so high importance and so commonly neglected, I will therefore shew, that it is sossible, by trying to come to a certainty, what hinders men from trying and knowing their state; then offer motives to examine, and directions; together with some marks out of Scripture, by which you may try and certainly know, whether you are the people of God or not.

SECT. IV. 1. Scripture shows, that the certainty of salvation may be attained, and ought to be laboured for, when it tells us so frequently, that the saints be ore us have known their justification and future salvation: when it declares, that whosoever believeth Christ shall not perish, but have everlasting life; mich it would be in vain to declare, if we cannot know ourselves to be believers or not: when it makes a wide difference between the children of God. and the children of the devil: when it bids us give diligence to make our calling and election sure; and ernestly urges us to examine, prove, know our own lves, whether we be in the faith, and whether Jesus thrist be in us except we be reprobates; also when be precepts require us to rejoice always, to call God Father, to live in his praises, to love Christ's apmaning, to wish that he may come quickly, and to ort ourselves with the mention of it. But who do any of these heartily, that is not in some sensure sure that he is the child of God?

SECT. V. 2. Arong the many hinderances which men from self-examination, we cannot doubt a satan will do his part. If all the power he hath, all the means and instruments he can employ, can

do it, he will be sure above all duties to keep you from this. He is loath the godly should have the joy, assurance, and advantage against corruption. which the faithful performance of self-examination would procure them. As for the ungodly, he knows if they should once earnestly examine, they would find out his deceits and their own danger, and so be very likely to escape him. How could he get so many millions to hell willingly, if they knew they were going thither? And how could they avoid knowing it, if they did but thoroughly try; having such a clear light and sure rule in the Scripture to discover it? If the snare be not hid, the bird will escap Satan knows how to angle for souls, better that to show them the hook and line, or fright them away with a noise, or with his own appearance. Therefore he labours to keep them from a searching ministry; or to keep the minister from helping them to search; or to take off the edge of the word, that it may not pierce and divide; or to turn away their thoughts; or to possess them with prejudice. Satan knows when the minister has provided a searching sermon fitted to the state and necessity of a hearer; and therefore he will keep him away that day, if it be possible; or cast him into a sleep; or steal away the word by the cares and talk of the world; or some way prevent its operation. SECT. VI. Another great hinderance to self-examination ariseth from wicked men. Their examples:

ally insisting on worldly concerns; their raillery and scoffs at godly persons; also their persuasions, allurements, and threats, are each of them exceeding great temptations to security. God doth scarcely ever open the eyes of a poor sinner to see that his way is wrong, but presently there is a multitude of Satan's apostles ready to deceive and settle him again in the quiet possession of his former master. "What!" say they, "do you make a doubt of your salvation, who have lived so well, and done nobody any harm? Out is merciful; and if such as you shall not be said God help a great many! What do you think control of the said of the s

their merry company and discourse; their continu-

what will become of all your that live as you do? Will ome, come, if you hearken to will drive you out of your sinners? And did not Christ ever trouble your head with shall do well." O how many arms kept asleep in deceit and I hell have awakened them! nner, and tells him, The gate w, and few find it: Try and s to make sure. The world ver trouble yourselves with s strait, sinner, consider it is prefathers, or neighbours, or ge you at last; and if Christ not save you; therefore comu that it is not from the words from the Word of God, you of salvation. When Ahab

e multitude of flattering pro-They can flatter men into not tell how to bring them seive you with vain words; ags cometh the wrath of God sobedience: be not ye theren," Ephes. v., 6, 7. greatest hinderances are in

greatest inhortances are in a ears so ignorant, that they mination is, nor what a minersuadeth them to try them of that there is any necessity man is bound to believe that bether it be true or false, and make any question of it: or santance can be attained; or littlerence between one man we are all Christians, and e ourselves any further; or wherein the difference lieses a of regeneration as Nico

demus had. Some will not believe that God will never make such a difference betwixt men in the life to come, and therefore will not search themselves whether they differ here. Some are so stunified. say what we can to them, that they lay it not to heart, but give us the hearing, and there is the end. Some are so possessed with self-love and pride, the they will not so much as suspect they are in any danger. Like a proud tradesman, who scorns the prudent advice of casting up his books; so to parents will not believe or hear any evil of the children. Some are so guilty, that they dare n try; and yet they dare venture on a more dreaded trial. Some are so in love with sin, and so distile the way of God, that they dare not try their ways, lest they be forced from the course they love to t which they loath. Some are so resolved never to change their present state, that they neglect examination as a useless thing. Before they will seek a new way when they have lived so long, and gone so far, they will put their eternal state to the venture, some of it what will. Many men are so busy in the world, that they cannot set themselves to the tryi their title to heaven. Others are so clogged w slothfulness of spirit, that they will not be at the pains of an hour's examination of their own hearts. But the most common and dangerous impediment is that false faith and hope, commonly called presumetion, which bears up the hearts of the greatest part of the world, and so keeps them from suspecting their danger. SECT. VIII. And if a man should break through

SECT. VIII. And if a man should break through all these hindcrances, and set upon the duty of self-examination, yet assurance is not presently attained. Too many deceive themselves in their in quiries after it, through one or another of the following causes:—There is such confusion and darkness in the soul of man, especially of an unrecessarian the soul of man, especially of an unrecessarian that he can scarcely tell which he dodo, what is in him. As in a house, where nothing in its proper place, it will be difficult to find.

TO THE SAINTS' REST.

wanted; so it is in the heart where all things are disorder. Most men accustom themselves to be angers at home, and too little observe the temper I motions of their own hearts. Many are resolved at to judge before they try: like a bribed judge, o examines as if he would judge uprightly, when is previously resolved which way the cause shall Men are partial in their own cause; ready think their great sins small, and their smalls sins ne; their gifts of nature to be the work of grace, I to say, All these have I kept from my youth; I rich, and increased in goods, and have need of hing. Most men search but by the halves. If it 1 not easily and quickly be done, they are dis-traged, and leave off. They try themselves by se marks and rules, not knowing wherein the th of Christianity doth consist, some looking bed, and some short of, the Christian standard. I frequently they miscarry in this work by atpting it in their own strength. As some expect Spirit should do it without them, so others att it themselves without seeking or expecting the of the Spirit. Both these will certainly miscarry ir assurance.

77. IX. Some other hinderances keep even true tians from comfortable certainty. As for in-:-The weakness of grace. Small things are discerned. Most Christians content themwith a small measure of grace, and do not on to spiritual strength and manhood. The emedy for such would be, to follow on their Il their grace be increased. Wait upon God se of his prescribed means, and he will unly bless you with increase. O! that Chrisvald bestow most of that time to getting ce, which they bestow in anxious doubtings they have any or none! and lay out those ections in praying for more grace which in fruitless complaints! I beseech thee, the this advice as from God; and then elievest strongly, and lovest fervently.

thou canst no more doubt of thy faith and love, than a man that is very hot can doubt of his warmth, or a man that is strong and lusty can doubt of his being alive. Christians hinder their own comfort by looking more at signs, which tell them what they are, than at precepts, which tell them what they should do. As if their present case must needs be their everlasting case; and if they be now unpardoned, there were no remedy. Were he not mad, that would lie weeping because he is not pardoned, when his prince stands by all the while offering him pardon, and persuading him to accept of it? Justifying faith, Christian, is not thy persuasion of God's special love to thee, but thy accepting Christ to make thee lovely. It is far better to accept Christ as offered, than spend so much time in doubting whether we have Christ or not.—Another cause of distress to Christians is, their mistaking assurance for the joy that sometimes accompanies it. As if a child should take himself for a son no longer than while he sees the smiles of his father's face, or hears the comfortable expressions of his mouth: and as if the father ceased to be a father, whenever he ceased those smiles and speeches. The trouble of souls is also increased by their not knowing the ordinary way of God's conveying comfort. They think they have nothing to do but to wait when God will bestow it. But they must know that the matter of their comfort is in the promises, and thence they must fetch it as often as they expect it, by daily and diligently meditating upon the promises: and in this way they may expect the Spirit will communicate comfort to their souls. The joy of the promises and the joy of the Holy Ghost are one. Add to this their expecting a greater measure of assurance than God usually bestows. As long as they have any doubting, they think they have no assurance. They consider not that there are many degrees of certainty. While they are here, they shall know but in part And also, their deriving their comfort at first from insufficient grounds. This may be the case of a , ricious soul who hath better grounds, but doth not

see them. As an infant hath life before he knoweth it, and many misapprehensions of himself and other things, yet it will not follow that he hath no life. So when Christians find a flaw in their first comforts, they are not to judge it a flaw in their safety. Many continue under doubting, through the exceeding weakness of their natural parts. Many honest hearts have weak heads, and know not how to perform the work of self-trial. They will acknowledge the premises, and yet deny the apparent conclusion. If God do not some other way supply the defect of their reason, I see not how they should have clear and settled peace. One great and too common cause of distress is, the secret maintaining of some known sin. This abates the degree of our graces, and so makes them more undiscernible. It obscureth that which it destroyeth not; for it beareth such away, that grace is not in action, nor seems to stir, nor is scarce heard speak, for the noise of this corruption. It puts out, or dimmeth, the eye of the soul, and stupifies it, that it can neither see nor feel its own con-But especially it provokes God to withdraw himself, his comforts, and the assistance of his Spirit, without which we may search long enough before we have assurance. God hath made a separation between sin and peace. As long as thou dost cherish thy pride, thy love of the world, the desires of the flesh, or any unchristian practice, thou expectest comfort in vain. If a man setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a minister, or to God, to inquire for comfort, instead of comforting him, God "will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols," Ezek. xiv. 3-9. Another very great and common cause of the want of comfort is, when grace is not kept in constant and lively exercise. The way of painful duty is the way of fullest comfort. Peace and comfort are Christ's great encouragments to faithfulness and obedience; and therefore, though our obedience does not merit them, yet they usuall

rise and fall with our diligence in duty. As Pray

must have faith and fervency to procure it succ besides the blood and intercession of Christ, so n all other parts of our obedience. If thou grow seld and customary, and cold in duty, especially in secret prayers to God, and yet findest no abaten in thy joys, I cannot but fear thy joys are ei carnal or diabolical. Besides grace is never appea and sensible to the soul but while it is in act therefore want of action must cause want of assura And the action of the soul upon such excellent obj naturally bringeth consolation with it. The v act of loving God in Christ is inexpressibly sw The soul that is best furnished with grace, when not in action, is like a lute well stringed and tu which, while it lieth still, maketh no more music t a common piece of wood; but when it is handled a skilful musician, the melody is delightful. S degree of comfort follows every good action, as l accompanies fire, and as beams and influence is from the sun. A man that is cold should labour heat be excited; so he that wants assurance must stand still, but exercise his graces, till his do vanish. The want of consolation in the soul is very commonly owing to bodily melancholy.

them to the comfortable conclusion. All the g thoughts of their state which you can possibly I them to, are seldom above a day or two old. cry out of sin, and the wrath of God, when the c cause is in their bodily distemper.

no more wonder for a conscientious man, under lancholy, to doubt, and fear, and despair, than f sick man to groan, or a child to cry when it is c tised. Without the physician in this case, the lab of the divine are usually in vain. You may sile but you cannot comfort them. You may make tl confess they have some grace, and yet cannot be

SECT. X. 3. As for motives to persuade to duty of self-examination, I entreat you to com the following:-To be deceived about your ti heaven, is very easy. Many are now in hel never suspected any falsehood in their hear

excelled in worldly wisdom, that lived in the clear light of the Gospel, and even preached against the negligence of others. To be mistaken in this great point, is also very common. It is the case of most in the world. In the old world, and in Sodom, we find none that were in any fear of judgment. Almost all men among us verily look to be saved: yet Christ tells us," there be few that find the strait gate, and narrow way, which leadeth unto life," Matt. vii. 14. And if such multitudes are deceived, should we not search the more diligently, lest we should be deceived as well as they? Nothing is more dangerous than to be thus mistaken. If the godly judge their state worse than it is, the consequences of this mistake will be sorrowful: but the mischief flowing from the mistake of the ungodly is unspeakable. It will exceedingly confirm them in the service of Satan. It will render ineffectual the means that should do them good. It will keep a man from compassionating his own soul. It is a case of the greatest moment, where everlasting salvation or damnation is to be determined. And if you mistake till death, you are undone for ever. Seeing then the danger is so great, what wise man would not follow the search of his heart both day and night, till he were assured of his safety? Consider how small the labour of this duty is, in comparison of that sorrow which followeth its neglect. You can endure to toil and sweat from year to year to prevent poverty; and why not spend a little time in self-examination, to prevent eternal misery? By neglecting this duty, you can scarce do Satan a greater pleasure, nor yourselves a greater injury. It is the grand design of the devil, in all his temptations, to deceive you, and keep you ignorant of your danger, till you feel the everlasting flames! And will you join with him to deceive yourself? \\ you do this for him, you do the greatest part of his work. And hath he deserved so well of you, that you should assist him in such a design as your damnation? The time is nigh when God will searc you. If it be but in this life by affliction, it w

make you wish that you had tried and judged your-selves, that you might have escaped the judgment of God. It was a terrible voice to Adam, Where art thou? Hast thou eaten of the tree. And to Cain, Where is thy brother? Men "consider not in their hearts, that I, saith the Lord, remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face," Hosea vii. 2. Consider also, what would be the sweet effects of this self-examination. If thou be upright and godly, it will lead thee straight towards assurance of God's love; if thou be not, though it will trouble thee at the present, yet it will tend to thy happiness, and at length lead thee to the assurance of that happiness. Is it not a desirable thing to know what shall befal us hereafter? especially what shall befal our souls? and what place and state we must be in for ever? And as the very knowledge itself is desirable, how much greater will the comfort be of that certainty of salvation! What sweet thoughts wilt thou have of God! All that greatness and justice, which is the error of others, will be thy joy. How sweet may be, thy thoughts of Christ, and the blood he hath shed, and the benefits he hath procured! How welcome will the Word of God be to thee, and how beautiful the very feet of those that bring it! How sweet will be the promises, when thou art sure they are thine own! The very threatenings will occasion thy comfort, to remember that thou hast escaped them. What boldness and comfort mayest thou then have in prayer, when thou canst say, "Our Father," in full assurance! It will make the Lord's Supper a refreshing feast to thy soul. It will multiply the sweetness of every common mercy. How comfortably mayest thou then undergo all afflictions! How will it sweeten thy forethoughts of death and judgment, of heaven and hell! How lively will it make thee in the work of the Lord, and how profitable to all around thee! What vigour will it infuse into all hy graces and affections, kindle thy repentance, inthy love, quicken thy desires, and confirm thy have weight of reason in them; yet I am jea reader, lest you lay aside the book, as if you done, and never set yourself to the practice of duty. The case in hand is of the greatest mon whether thou shalt everlastingly live in heaver hell. I here request thee, in behalf of thy soul, I charge thee, in the name of the Lord, that defer no longer, but take thy heart to task in earnest, and think with thyself, "Is it so eas common, and so dangerous, to be mistaken? there so many wrong ways? Is the heart so de ful? Why then do I not search into every con till I know my state? Must I so shortly und the trial at the bar of Christ? and do I not prese try myself? What a case were I in, if I should miscarry! May I know by a little diligent inq now; and do I stick at the labour?" But per thou wilt say, "I know not how to do it." In I am now to give thee directions; but, alas! it be in vain, if thou art not resolved to practise the Wilt thou, therefore, before thou goest any fart here promise before the Lord, to set thyself upon speedy performance of the duty, according to directions I shall lay down from the Word of (

I demand nothing unreasonable or impossible.
but to bestow a few hours, to know what shall
come of thee for ever. If a neighbour or a fr
desire but an hour's time of thee in conversatior
business, or any thing in which thou mayest'
service, surely thou wouldst not deny it; how
less shouldst thou deny this to thyself in so t
affair! I pray thee to take from me this re
if, in the name of Christ, I presented it to
my knees; and I will betake me on mo

SECT. XI. Though I am certain these mo

Christ again, to beg that he will persuade thy heart to the duty.

SECT. XII. 4. The directions how to examine thy-

self are such as these:- Empty thy mind of all other cares and thoughts, that they may not distract or. divide thy mind. This work will be enough at once, without joining others with it. Then fall down before God in hearty prayer, desiring the assistance of his Spirit, to discover to thee the plain truth of thy condition, and to enlighten thee in the whole progress of this work. Make choice of the most convenient time and place. Let the place be the most private: and the time when you have nothing to interrupt you: and, if possible, let it be the present time. Have in readiness, either in memory or writings, some scriptures, containing the descriptions of the saints, and the Gospel terms of salvation; and convince thyself thoroughly of their infallible truth. Proceed then to put the question to thyself. Let it not be, whether there be any good in thee at all? nor, whether thou hast such or such a degree and measure of grace? but, whether such or such a saving grace be in thee in sincerity, or not? If thy heart draw back from the work, force it on. Lay thy command upon it. Let reason interpose and use its authority. Yea, lay the command of God upon it, and charge it to obey upon the pain of his displeasure. Let conscience also do its office, till thy heart be excited to the work. Nor let thy heart trifle away the time, when it should be diligently at the work. Do as the psalmist, My spirit made diligent search. He that can prevail with his own heart, shall also prevail with God. If, after all thy pains, thou art not resolved, then seek out for help. Go to one that is godly, experienced, able, and faithful, and tell him thy case, and desire his best advice. Use the judgment of such a one, as that of a physician for thy body: though this can afford thee no full certainty, yet it may be a great help to stay and direct thee. But do not make it a pretence to put off thy own self-examination. Only use t as one of the last remedies, when thy own ender

vours will not serve. When thou hast discovered thy true state, pass sentence on thyself accordingly; either that thou art a true Christian, or that thou art not. Pass not this sentence rashly, nor with self-flattery, nor with melancholy terrors; but deliberately, truly, and according to thy conscience, convinced by Scripture and reason. Labour to get thy heart affected with its condition, according to the sentence passed on it. If graceless, think of thy misery. If re-newed and sanctified, think what a blessed state the Lord hath brought thee into. Pursue these thoughts till they have left their impression on thy heart. Write this sentence at least in thy memory: "At such a time, upon thorough examination, I found my state to be thus or thus." Such a record will be very useful to thee hereafter. Trust not to this one discovery, so as to try no more: nor let it hinder thee in the daily search of thy ways; neither be discouraged, if the trial must be often repeated. Especially take heed, if unregenerate, not to conclude of thy future state by the present. Do not say," Because I am ungodly, I shall die so; because I am a hypocrite, I shall continue so." Do not despair. Nothing but thy unwillingness can keep thee from Christ, though thou hast hitherto abused him, and dissembled with him.

SECT. XIII. 5. Now let me add some marks by which you may try your title to the saints' rest. I will only mention these two,—taking God for thy chief good—and heartily accepting Christ for thy only Saviour and Lord.

SECT. XIV. Every soul that hath a title to this rest, doth place his chief happiness in God. This rest consistent in the full and glorious enjoyment of God. He that maketh not God his chief good and ultimate end, is in heart a pagan and vile idolater. Let me ask, then, Dost thou truly account it thy chief happiness to enjoy the Lord in glory, or dost thou not? Canst thou say, The Lord is my portion't whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is non upon earth that I desire besides thee? If thou be

heir of rest, it is thus with thee. Though the flesh will be pleading for its own delights, and the world will be creeping into thine affections: yet in thy ordinary, settled, prevailing judgment and affections thou preferrest God before all things in the world. Thou makest him the very end of thy desires and endeavours. The very reason why thou hearest, and prayest, and desirest to live on earth, is chiefly this, that thou mayest seek the Lord, and make sure of thy rest. Though thou dost not seek it so sealously as thou shouldst; yet it has the chief of thy desires and endeavours, so that nothing else is desired or preferred before it. Thou wilt think no labour or suffering too great to obtain it. And though the flesh may sometimes shrink, yet thou art resolved and contented to go through all. Thy esteem for it will also be so high, and thy affection to it so great, that thou wouldst not exchange thy title to it, and hopes of it, for any worldly good whatsoever. If God should set before thee an eternity of earthly pleasures on one hand, and the saints' rest on the other. and bid thee take thy choice, thou wouldst refuse the world, and choose this rest. But if thou art yet unsanctified, then thou dost in thy heart prefer thy worldly happiness before God; and though thy tongue may say that God is thy chief good, yet thy heart doth not so esteem him. For the world is the chief end of thy desires and endeavours. Thy very heart is set upon it. Thy greatest care and labour is to maintain thy credit, or fleshly delights. But the life to come hath little of thy care or labour. didst never perceive so much excellence in that unseen glory of another world, as to draw thy heart after it, and set thee a-labouring heartily for it. The little pains thou bestowest that way is but in the second place, God hath but the world's leavings, only that time and labour which thou canst spare from the world, or those few, cold, and careless thoughts which follow thy constant, earnest, and delightful thoughts of earthly things. Neither wouldst thou do any thing at all for heaven if thou knewest how to

keep the world. But lest thou shouldst be turned into hell, when thou canst keep the world no longer. therefore thou wilt do something. For the same reason, thou thinkest the way of God too strict, and will not be persuaded to the constant labour of walking according to the Gospel rule; and when it comes to the trial, that thou must forsake Christ or thy worldly happiness, then thou wilt venture heaven rather than earth, and so wilfully deny thy obedience to God. And certainly if God would but give thee leave to live in health or wealth for ever on earth, thou wouldst think it a better state than rest. Let them seek for heaven that would, thou wouldst think this thy chief happiness. This is thy case, if thou art yet an unregenerate person, and hast no

title to the saints' rest. SECT. XV. And as thou takest God for thy chief good, so thou dost heartily accept of Christ for thy only Saviour and Lord, to bring thee to this rest. The former mark was the sum of the first and great command of the law, " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." The second mark is the sum of the command of the Gospel, " Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And the performance of these two is the whole of godliness and Christianity. This mark is but the definition of faith. Dost thou heartily consent that Christ alone shall be thy Saviour? and no farther trust to thy

duties and works than as means appointed in subordination to him? and looking at them as not in the least measure able to satisfy the curse of the law, or as a legal righteousness, or any part of it; but consent to trust thy salvation on the redemption made by Christ? Art thou also content to take him for thy only Lord and king, to govern and guide thee by his · laws and Spirit; and to obey him, even when he saints' rest.

SECT. XVI. Observe, it is the consent of your hearts, or wills, which I especially lay down to be inquired after. I do not ask, whether thou be assured of salvation? nor whether thou canst believe that thy sins are pardoned, and that thou art beloved of God in Christ? These are no parts of justifying faith, but excellent fruits of it, and they that receive them are comforted by them; but perhaps thou mayest never receive them while thou livest, and yet be a true heir of rest. Do not say then, "I cannot believe that my sins are pardoned, or that I am in God's favour; and therefore I am no true believes." This is a most mistaken conclusion. The question is, whether thou dost heartily accept of Christ that thou mayest be pardoned, reconciled to God, and so aswed?

Dost thou consent that he shall be thy Lord, whe

hath bought thee, and that he shall bring thee

his own way? This is justifying, saving he mark by which thou must try thyself. serve, that all this consent must be hearty of fedgned or with reservations. It is not that dissembling son, "I go, sir;" and If any have more of the government of Christ, thou art not his disciple. I am two marks are such as every Christian none but sincere Christians. O that the I now persuade thee to the close performs self-trial! that thou mayest not tremble of soul, when the Judge of all the world lee; but be so able to prove thy title to the prospect and approach of death and may raise thy spirits, and fill thee with

VII. On the whole, as ever Christians e comforts that will not deceive them, let it the great labour of their lives to grow o strengthen and advance the interest of heir souls, and to weaken and subdue the the flesh. Deceive not yourselves with on that Christ hath done all, and left you do. To overcome the world, the flesh, vil; and in order to that, to stand always n our watch, and valiantly and patiently ut, is of great importance to our assurance on. Indeed it is so great a part of our 70w, that he who performeth it not is no a nominal Christian. Not to every one umptuously believeth," but "to him that 1, will Christ give to eat of the hidden I will give him a white stone, and in the v name written, which no man knoweth, that receiveth it: he shall eat of the tree ch is in the midst of the paradise of God, tot be hurt of the second death. Christ his name before his Father, and before and make him a pillar in the temple of shall go no more out; and will writ name of his God, and the name of t city of his God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from his God, and will write upon him his new name." Yes, "he will grant to him to sit with him on his throne, even as he also overcame, and is set down with his Father on his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17; iii. 5, 12, 21, 22.

CHAPTER IX.

DUTY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD TO EXCITE OTHERS TO -

figur. I. The author largests that Christians do so little to help others to obtain the saints' ress. Sur. II. (1.) Shows the nature of the duty; particularly, Sur. III. I. In having our hearts affected with the misery of our brethren's scale; Sur. IV.—VI. 2. In taking all opportunities to instruct them in the way of salvation; Sur. VII. 3. In promoting their profit by public ordinances. Sur. VIII. (II.) A naigns various reasons why this duty is so much neglected; Sur. IX. And answers some objections against it; Sur. X.—XIII. Them (III.) urges to the discharge of it by several considerations; Sur. XIV. Addressed to such as have knowledge, learning, and utterance, Sur. X. Those that are acquainted with sinner; Sur. X. YII. Physicians that attend dying men; Sur. X. XIII. Persons of wealth and power; Sur. XVIII. Ministers; Sur. XVIII. And those that are entrusted with the care of children or servants. Sur. X.X. The chapter concludes with an earnest request to Christian parents to be faithful to their trust.

SECT. I. Hath God set before us such a glorious prize as the saints' rest, and made us capable of such inconceivable happiness? Why then do not all the children of this kingdom exert themselves more to help others to the enjoyment of it? Alas, how little are poor souls about us beholden to most of us! We see the glory of the kingdom, and they do not: we see the misery of those that are out of it, and they do not: we see some wandering quite out of the way, and know if they hold on, they can never come there; and they themselves discern it not. And yet we will not seriously show them their danger and error, and help to bring them into the way, that they may live Alas, how few Christians are there to be found, the

..... snow how it is to be

se some considerations to persuade to it. SECT. II. 1. The duty of exciting and helping sers to discern their title to the saints' rest, doth t mean that every man should turn a public acher, or that any should go beyond the bounds their particular callings; much less does it consist promoting a party spirit; and least of all in speak; against men's faults behind their backs, and be ent before their faces. This duty is of another ure, and consists of the following things; in havour hearts affected with the misery of our breth-'s souls; in taking all opportunities to instruct n in the way of salvation; and in promoting their it by public ordinances.

sor. III. 1. Our hearts must be affected with nisery of our brethren's souls. We must be assionate towards them, and yearn after their ery and salvation. If we earnestly longed after conversion, and our hearts were solicitous to sm good, it would set us on work, and God usually bless it.

r. IV. 2. We must take every opportunity that sibly can, to instruct them how to If the person be

true nature of them. tertaining false hopes, then urge training training the work of doing so; in it; nor leave him till you have convince of his misery and remedy. Show him how vata destructive it is to join Christ and his duties, to pose his justifying righteousness. Yet be sur draw him to the use of all means; such as he and reading the word, calling upon God, and as ating with the godly; persuade him to foraske avoid all temptations to sin, especially evil panions, and to wait patiently on God in the veneans, as the way in which God will be found.

SECT. V. But because the manner of perforthis work is of great moment, observe therefore rules:—Enter upon it with right intentions, the glory of God in the person's salvation. D to get a name, or esteem, to thyself, or to brit to depend upon thee, or to get thee followers obedience to Christ, in imitation of him, and the men's souls. Do not as those who in the salvaren or servants from such

are purposing to prevent it? If in the case of his bodily distress you must not say to him, "Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee," Prov. iii. 28; how much less may you delay the succour of his soul! That physician is no better than a murderer, who negligently delayeth till his patient is dead or past cure. Lay by excuses then, and all lesser business, and "exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day," Heb. iii. 13, "lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Let your exhortation proceed from compassion and love. To jeer and scoff, to rail and vilify, is not a likely way to reform men, or convert them to God. Go to poor sinners with tears in your eyes, that they may see you believe them to be miserable, and that you unfeignedly pity their case. Deal with them with earnest humble entreaties. Let them perceive it is the desire of your hearts to do them good; that you have no other end but their everlasting happiness; and that it is your sense of their danger, and your love to their souls, that forceth you to speak; even because you know the terrors of the Lord, and for fear you should see them in eternal torments. Say to them, "Friend, you know I seek no advantage of my own; the method to please you and keep your friendship, were to soothe you in your way, or let you alone; but love will not suffer me to see you perish, and be silent. I seek nothing at your hands, but that which is necessary to your own happiness. It is yourself that will have the gain and comfort if you come to Christ." If we were thus to go to every gnorant and wicked neighbour, what blessed fruit should we quickly see! Do it with all possible plainness and faithfulness. Do not make their sins less than they are, nor encourage them in a false hope. If you see the case dangerous, speak plainly: - Neighbour, I am afraid God hath not yet renewed your soul; I doubt you are not yet recovered from the power of Satan to God; I doubt you have not chosen Christ above all, nor unfeignedly taken him for your sovereign Lord. If you had, surely you durst in

so easily disobey him, nor neglect his worship in your family, and in public; you could not so eagerly follow the world, and talk of nothing but the things of the world. If you were in Christ, you would be a new creature; old things would be passed away, and all things would become new: you would have new thoughts, new talk, new company, new endeavours, and a new conversation. Certainly, without these you can never be saved; you may think otherwise, and hope otherwise as long as you will, but your hopes will all deceive you, and perish with you."
Thus must you deal faithfully with men, if ever you intend to do them good. It is not in curing men's souls, as in curing their bodies, where they must not know their danger, lest it hinder the cure. They are here agents in their own cure; and if they know not their misery, they will never bewail it, nor know their need of a Saviour. Do it also seriously, zeal-ously, and effectually. Labour to make men know-that heaven and hell are not matters to be played with, or passed over with a few careless thoughts. "It is most certain that one of these days thou shalt be in everlasting joy or terment; and doth it not awaken thee? Are there so few that find the way of life? so many that go the way of death? Is it so hard to escape? so easy to miscarry? and yet you do sit still and trifle. What do you mean? The world is passing away: its pleasures, honours, and profits are fading, and leaving you; eternity is a little before you; God is just and jealous: his threatenings are true: the great day will be terrible: time runs on: your life is uncertain: you are far behind-hand: your case is dangerous: if you die to-morrow, how unready are you! with what terror will your souls go out of your bodies! And do you yet loiter? Consider, God is all this while waiting your leisure: his patience beareth: his long-suffering forbeareth: his mercy entreateth you: Christ offereth you his blood and merits: the Spirit is persuading: conscience is teensing: Satan waits to have you. This is your me-now or never. Had you rather burn in hall



EXCITE OTHERS TO SEEK THIS REST.

n repent on earth? have devils your tormen n Christ your governor? will you renounce y t in God and glory, rather than renounce y s? O friends, what do you think of these thing d hath made you men: do not renounce your r where you should chiefly use it." Alas, it is n sw dull words, between jest and earnest, betwee sp and awake, that will rouse a dead-hearted sinner house be on fire, you will not make a cold oration the nature and danger of fire; but will run and fire! fire! To tell a man of his sins, as softly Eli did his sons; or to reprove him as gently as losaphat did Ahab, "Let not the king say so;" ally doth as much harm as good: loathness to disase men makes us undo them. SECT. VI. Yet, lest you run into extremes, I ise you to do it with prudence and discretion. v are in a passion, or where they will take it for a race. When the earth is soft the plough will en-Take a man when he is under affliction, or newnpressed under a sermon. Christian faithfulrequires us, not only to do good when it falls in ay, but to watch for opportunities. Suit youralso to the quality and temper of the person. just deal with the ingenious more by argument ersuasion. There is need of both to the igno-'he affections of the convinced should be chiefed. The obstinate must be sharply reproved. orous must be dealt with tenderly. Love, ness, and seriousness, take with all; but words some can scarce bear. Use also the aptest ns. Unseeming language makes the hearers food they should live by; especially if they curious ears and carnal hearts. Let all ofs and exhortations be backed with the of God. Let sinners be convinced that ot of your own head. Turn them to the and verse where their sin is condemned, commanded. The voice of man is con the voice of God is awful and terribl

They may reject your words, that dare not reject the words of the Almighty. Be frequent with men in this duty of exhortation. If we are always to pray, and not to faint, because God will have us importunate with himself, the same course, no doubt, will be most prevailing with men. Therefore we are commanded " to exhort one another daily," Heb. iii. 18, "and with all long-suffering," 2 Tim. iv. 2. The fire is not always brought out of the flint at one stroke; nor men's affections kindled at the first exhortation. And if they were, yet if they be not followed they will soon grow cold again. Follow sinners with your loving and earnest entreaties, and give them no rest in their sin. This is true charity, the way to save men's souls, and will afford you comfort upon review. Strive to bring all your exhortations to an issue. If we speak the most convincing words, and all our care is over with our speech, we shall seldom prosper in our labours: but God usually blesses their labours, whose very heart is set upon the conversion of their hearers, and who are therefore inquiring after the success of their work. If you reprove a sin, cease not till the sinner promises you to leave it, and avoid the occasion of it. If you are exhorting to a duty, urge for a promise to set upon it presently. If you would draw men to Christ, leave not till you have made them confess the misery of their present unregenerate state, and the necessity of Christ, and of a change, and have promised you to fall close to the use of means. O that all Christians would take this course with their neighbours that are enslaved to sin, and strangers to Christ!-Once more, be sure your example exhort as well as your words. Let them see you constant in all the duties you persuade them to. Let them see in your lives that superiority to the world which your lips recommend. Let them see, by your constant labours for heaven, that you indeed believe what you would have them believe. A holy and heavenly life is a continual pain to the consciences of sinners around you, and continually plicits them to change their course.

SECT. VII. 3. Besides the duty of private admonition, you must endeavour to help men to profit by the public ordinances. In order to that, -endeavour to procure for them faithful ministers, where they are wanting. "How shall they hear without a preacher," Rom. x. 14. Improve your interest and dili-gence to this end, till you prevail. Extend your purses to the utmost. How many souls may be saved by the ministry you have procured! It is a higher and nobler charity than relieving their bodies. What abundance of good might great men do, if they would support, in academical education, such youth as they have first carefully chosen for their integrity and piety, till they should be fit for the ministry! And when a faithful ministry is obtained, help poor souls to receive the fruit of it. Draw them constantly to attend it. Remind them often what they have heard; and, if it be possible, let them hear it repeated in their families or elsewhere. Promote their frequent meeting together, besides publicly in the congregation; not as a separate church, but as a part of the church, more diligent than the rest in redeeming time, and helping the souls of each other heavenward. Labour also to keep the ordinances and ministry in esteem. No man will be much wrought on by that which he despiseth. An apostle says, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you, in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake," 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

SECT. VIII. (II.) Let us now a little inquire, what may be the causes of the gross neglect of this duty; that the hinderance being discovered, may the more easily be overcome. One hinderance is, men's own sin and guilt. They have not themselves been ravished with heavenly delights; how then should they draw others so earnestly to seek them? There have not felt their own lost condition, nor their relation of Christ, nor the renewing work of the Spirit own then can they discover these to others?

them ashamed to reprove. Another is, a secret infidelity prevailing in men's hearts. Did we verily believe, that all the unregenerate and unholy would be eternally tormented, how could we hold our tongues, or avoid bursting into tears, when we look them in the face, especially when they are our near and dear friends? Thus doth secret unbelief consume the vigour of each grace and duty. O Christians, if you did verily believe that your ungodly neighbours, wife, husband, or child, should certainly lie for ever in hell, except they be thoroughly changed before death shall snatch them away, would not this make you address them day and night till they were persuaded? Were it not for this cursed unbelief, our own and our neighbours' souls would gain more by us than they do. These attempts are also much hindered by our want of charity and compassion for men's souls. We look on miserable souls, and pass by, as the priest and Levite by the wounded man. What though the sinner, wounded by sin, and captivated by Satan, do not desire thy help himself; yet his misery cries aloud. If God had not heard the cry of our miseries, before he heard the cry of our prayers, and be moved by his own pity, before he was moved by our importunity, we might long have continued the slaves of Satan. You will pray to God for them to open their eyes, and turn their hearts; and why not endeavour their conversion, if you desire it? And if you do not desire it, why do you ask it? Why do you not pray them to consider and return, as well as pray to God to convert and turn them? If you should see your neighbour fallen into a pit, and should pray to God to help him out, but neither put forth your hand to help him, nor once direct him to help himself, would not any man censure you ar your cruelty and hyporisy? It is as true of the sail as of the body. If imman seeth his brother has need, and shutteth A hobowels of compassion from him, how dwelled the conscie of God in him? or what love hath he to his conscie of God in him? or what when the his conscie. solicits thoul? We are also in gred by a bar

nost unconscionably neglect our own duty. He is foolish and unfaithful physician that will let a sick

nan die for fear of troubling him. If our friends are distracted, we please them in nothing that tends o their hurt. And yet when they are beside themelves in point of salvation, and in their madness osting on to damnation, we will not stop them, for ear of displeasing them. How can we be Christians, hat love the praise of men more than the praise of od? For if we seek to please men, we shall not be he servants of Christ. It is common to be hindered by sinful bashfulness. When we should shame men out of their sins, we are ourselves ashamed of our luties. May not these sinners condemn us when hey blush not to swear, be drunk, or neglect the vorship of God; and we blush to tell them of it, and persuade them from it? Bashfulness is unseemly in ases of necessity. It is not a work to be ashamed of, to obey God in persuading men from their sins to Brist. Reader, hath not thy conscience told thee if thy duty many a time, and put thee on to speak o poor sinners; and yet thou hast been ashamed to men thy mouth, and so let them alone to sink or wim? O read and tremble: "Whosoever shall be shamed of me and my words, in this adulterous and inful generation, of him also shall the Son of man se ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his 'ather, with the holy angels," Mark viii. 38. An dle and impatient spirit hindereth us. It is an untrateful work, and sometimes makes men our enenies. Besides, it seldom succeeds at the first, except t be followed on. You must be long teaching the gnorant, and persuading the obstinate. We con-

ider not what patience God used towards us, when wer to one store. Were to us if that had been as

great impediment. If it were to speak to a great man, and it would not displease him, they would do it. But to go among the poor, and take pains with them in their cottages; where is the person that will do it! Many will rejoice in being instrumental in converting a gentleman, (and they have good reason), but to overlook the multitude, as if the souls of all were not alike to God. Alas! these men little consider how low Christ stooped to us! Few rich, and noble, and wise, are called. It is the poor that receive the glad tidings of the Gospel. And with some their ignorance of the duty hindereth them from performing it. Either they know it not to be a duty, or at least not to be their duty. If this be thy case, reader, I am in hope thou art now acquainted with thy duty, and will set upon it.

SECT. IX. Do not object to this duty, that you are unable to manage an exhortation; but either set those on the work who are more able, or faithfully and humbly use the small ability you have, and tell them, as a weak man may do, what God says in his Word. Decline not the duty because it is your superior who needs advice and exhortation. Order must be dispensed with in cases of necessity. Though it be a husband, a parent, a minister, you must teach him in such a case. If parents are in want, children must relieve them. If a husband be sick, the wife must fill up his place in family affairs. If the rich are reduced to beggary, they must receive charity. If the physician be sick, somebody must look to him. So the meanest servant must admonish his master, and the child his parent, and the wife her husband, and the people their minister; so that it be done when their is real need, and with all possible humility, modesty, and meekness. Do not say, this will make us all preachers; for every good Christian is a teacher, and has a charge of his neighbour's soul. Every man is a physician, when a regular physician cannot be had, and when the hurt is so small that any man may relieve it; and in the same cases, every man must be a teacher. Do not despair of success Cannot God give it? And must it not be by means. Do not plead; it will only be casting pearls before swine. When you are in danger to be torn in pieces, Christ would have you forbear; but what is that to you that are in no such danger? As long as they will hear, you have encouragement to speak, and may not east them off as contemptible swine. Say not, "It is a friend on whom I much depend, and by telling him his sin and misery, I may lose his love, and be undone." Is his love more to be valued than his safety? or thy own benefit by him than the salvation of his soul? or wilt thou connive at his damnation, because he is thy friend? Is that thy best requital of his friendship? Hadst thou rather he should burn in hell for ever, than thou shouldst lose his favour, or the maintenance thou hast from him?

SECT. X. (III.) But that all who fear God may be excited to do their utmost to help others to this blessed rest, let me entreat you to consider the following motives. As for instance, not only nature, but especially grace disposes the soul to be communicative of good. Therefore to neglect this work is a sin both against nature and grace. Would you not think him unnatural, that would suffer his children or neighbours to starve in the streets, while he has provision at hand? And is not he more unnatural that will let them eternally perish, and not open his mouth to save them? An unmerciful cruel man is a monster to be abhorred of all. If God had bid you give them all your estates, or lay down your lives to save them, you would surely have refused, when you will not bestow a little breath to save them. Is not the soul of a husband, or wife, or child, or neighbour, worth a few words? Cruelty to men's bodies is a most damnable sin; but to their souls much more, as the soul is of greater worth than the body, and eternity than time. Little know you what many a soul may now be feeling in hell, who died for their sins, for want of your faithful admonition. Consider who Christ did toward the saving of souls. He though them worth his blood: and shall we not think the

own most cruel destroyers. Consic thy own cause. It was God's argume ites, to be kind to strangers, beca had been strangers in the land of Eg you pity them that are strangers to the hopes and comforts of the saint were once strangers to them yoursel your relation to them. It is thy brother, whom thou art bound to k He that loveth not his brother whom doth not love God whom he never se he love his brother, that will see him never hinder him? SECT. XI. Consider what a load o glect lays upon thy own soul. Tho the murder and damnation of all tho thou dost thus neglect; and of every commit, and of all the dishonour done

by; and of all those judgments which t upon the town or country where they I what it will be to look when

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ing to the knowledge and obedience of Jesus Christ! Consider how many souls you may have drawn into the way of damnation, or hardened in it. We have had, in the days of our ignorance, our companions in sin, whom we excited or encouraged. And doth it not become us to do as much to save

men as we have done to destroy them?-Consider how diligent are all the enemies of these poor souls to draw them to hell. The devil is tempting them day and night: their inward lusts are still working

for their ruin: the flesh is still pleading for its delights: their old companions are increasing their dislike of holiness. And if nobody be diligent in helping them to heaven, what is like to become of them?

SECT. XII. Consider how deep the neglect of this duty will wound, when conscience is awakened. When a man comes to die, conscience will ask him, "What good hast thou done in thy life-time? The saving of souls is the greatest good work: what hast thou done towards it? How many hast thou dealt

faithfully with?" I have often observed that the consciences of dying men very much wounded them for this omission. For my own part, when I have been near death, my conscience hath accused me more for this than for any other sin. It would bring every ignorant profanc neighbour to my remembrance, to whom I never made known their danger. It would tell me, "Thou shouldst have gone to them in private, and told them plainly of their desperate danger, though it had been when thou shouldst have caten, or slept, if thou hadst no other time." Conscience will remind me, how at such or such a time I was in company with the ignorant, or was riding by the way with a wilful sinner, and had a fit opportunity to have dealt with him, but did not; or at least did it to little purpose. The Lord grant I may

better obey conscience while I have time, that it may have less to accuse me of at death! Consider what

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strumental in saving souls, for which down and died, and in which the an joice. Such souls will bless you here God will have much glory by it. be multiplied and edified by it. You enjoy more improvement and vigour more peace of conscience, more rejo Of all the personal mercies that I eve to the love of God in Christ to my o most joyfully bless him for the plen my endeavours upon others. O w might I have seen, if I had been m know we need to be very jealous of our in this point, lest our rejoicing should pride. Naturally we would have the good work ascribed to ourselves. Ye Father in goodness and mercy, and t degree of them we attain to, is the dut of God. I therefore tell you my owr persuade you, that if you did but kno

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work where it is mithiumy done.

with you," hath left the ungodly always with you, that you might still have matter to exercise your charity upon. If you have the hearts of Christians or of men, let them yearn toward your ignorant, ungodly neighbours. Say, as the lepers of Samaria, "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." Hath God had so much mercy on you, and will you have no mercy on your poor neighbours? But as this duty belongs to all Christians, so especially to some, according as God hath called them to it, or qualified them for it. To them, therefore, I will more particularly address the exhortation.

SECT. XIV. God especially expects this duty at your hands, to whom he hath given more learning and knowledge, and endued with better utterance than your neighbours. The strong are made to help the weak; and those that see must direct the blind. God looketh for this faithful improvement of your parts and gifts, which, if you neglect, it were better you had never received them; for they will but aggravate your condemnation, and be as useless to your own salvation as they were to others.

SECT. XV. All those that are particularly acquainted with some ungodly men, and that have peculiar interest in them, God looks for this duty at your hands Christ himself did eat and drink with publicans and sinners; but it was only to be their physician, and not their companion. Who knows but God gave you interest in them to this end, that you might be the means of their recovery? They that will not regard the words of a stranger, may regard a brother, or sister, or husband, or wife, or near friend; besides that the bond of friendship engageth you to more kindness and compassion than ordinary.

ordinary.

SECT. XVI. Physicians, that are much about dying men, should in a special manner make conscience of this duty. It is their peculiar advantage that they are at hand; that they are with men sickness and dangers, when the ear is more of

and the heart less stubborn than in time of health; and that men look upon their physician as a person in whose hands is their life, or at least who may do much to save them, and therefore they will the more regard his advice. You that are of this honourable profession, do not think this a work beside your calling, as if it belonged to none but ministers; except you think it beside your calling to be compassionate, or to be Christians. O help, therefore, to fit your patients for heaven. And whether you see they are for life or death, teach them both how to live and die, and give them some physic for their souls, as you do for their bodies. Blessed be God, that very many of the chief physicians of this age have, by their eminent piety, vindicated their profession from the common imputation of atheism and profaneness.

SECT. XVII. Men of wealth and authority, and that have many dependents, have excellent advantages for this duty. O what a world of good might lords and gentlemen do, if they had but hearts to improve their influence over others! Have you not all your honour and riches from God? Doth not Christ say, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required?" If you speak to your dependents for God and their souls, you may be regarded, when even a minister shall be despised. As you value the honour of God, your own comfort, and the salvation of souls, improve your influence over your tenants and neighbours: visit their houses; see whether they worship God in their families; and take all opportunities to press them to their duty. Despise them not. Remember, God is no respecter of persons. Let them see that you excel others in piety, compassion, and diligence in God's work, as you do in the riches and honours of the world. I confess you will by this means be singular, but then you will be singular in glory; for few of the mighty and noble are called.

SECT. XVIII. As for the ministers of the Gospel, it is the very work of their calling to help others &

ter, that is best skilled in the art of instructing, con-

vincing, persuading, and consequently, of winning souls; and that is the best sermon that is best in these. When you seek not God, but yourselves, God will make you the most contemptible of men. It is true of your reputation what Christ says of your life. He that loveth it shall lose it. Let the vigour of your persuasions show that you are sensible on how weighty a business you are sent. Preach with that seriousness and fervour, as men that believe their own doctrine, and that know their hearers must be prevailed with, or be damned. Think not that all your work is in your studies and pulpit. You are shepherds, and must know every sheep, and what is their disease, and mark their strayings, and help to cure them and fetch them home. Learn of Paul, not only to teach your people publicly, but from house to house. Inquire how they grow in knowledge and holiness, and on what grounds they build their hopes of salvation, and whether they walk uprightly, and perform the duties of their several relations. See whether they worship God in their families; and teach them how to do it. Be familiar with them, that you may maintain your interest in them, and improve it all for God. Know of them how they profit by public teaching. If any too little savour the things of the Spirit, let them be pitied, but not neglected. If any walk disorderly, recover them with diligence and patience. If they be ignorant, it may be your fault as much as theirs. Be not asleep while the wolf is waking. Deal not slightly with any. Some will not tell their people plainly of their sins, because they are great men; and some, because

they are godly; as if none but the poor and the

and pray, and pray and study, till you are be workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly div the word of truth; that your people may no ashamed, nor weary in hearing you. Let your versation be teaching, as well as your doctrine. as forward in a holy and heavenly life as you a pressing others to it. Let your discourse be edit and spiritual. Suffer any thing, rather than Gospel and men's souls should suffer. Let me that you use not the ministry only for a trade to by: but that your hearts are set upon the welfa souls. Whatsoever meekness, humility, conder sion, or self-denial, you teach them from the Go teach it them also by your undissembled exam Study and strive after unity and peace. If ever would promote the kingdom of Christ, and people's salvation, do it in a way of peace and It is as hard a thing to maintain in your peop sound understanding, a tender conscience, a liv gracious, heavenly frame of spirit, and an up life, amidst contention, as to keep your candle lig in the greatest storms. Blessed is that serv whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall fine doing.

persuade to this great work of helping others to heavenly rest. Consider, what plain and presecommands of God require this at your hands. "IT words thou shalt teach diligently unto thy child and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thouse, and when thou walkest by the way, and w thou liest down, and when thou risest up," Deut 6, 7. "Train up a child in the way he should and when he is old, he will not depart from Prov. xxii. 6. "Bring up your children in the ture and admonition of the Lord," Ephes. v. Joshus resolved, that "he and his house would a the Lord," Josh. xxiv. 15. And God himself of Abraham, "I know him, that he will con his children, and his household after hims as

SECT. XIX. All you whom God hath intru with the care of children and servants, I would



shall keep the way of the Lord," Gen. xviii. 19. Consider, it is a duty you owe your children in point of justice. From you they received the defilement and misery of their natures; and therefore you owe them all possible help for their recovery. Consider, how near your children are to you. They are parts of yourselves. If they prosper when you are dead, you take it as if you lived and prospered in them; and should you not be of the same mind for their everlasting rest. Otherwise you will be witnesses against your own souls. Your care, and pains, and cost, for their bodies, will condemn you for your neglect of their precious souls. Yea, all the brute creatures may condemn you. Which of them is not tender of their young? Consider, God hath made your children your charge, and your servants too. Every one will confess they are the minister's charge. And have not you a greater charge of your own families than any minister can have of them? Doubtless at your hands God will require the blood of their souls. It is the greatest charge you were ever intrusted with; and woe to you if you suffer them to be ignorant or wicked for want of your instruction and correction. Consider what work there is for you, in their dispositions and lives. Theirs is not one sin, but thousands. They have hereditary diseases bred in their natures. The things you must teach them are contrary to the interests and desires of their flesh. May the Lord make you sensible what a work and charge lieth upon you! Consider what sorrows you prepare for yourselves by the neglect of your children. If they prove thorns in your eyes, they are of your own planting. If you should repent and be saved, is it nothing to think of their damnation; and yourselves the occasion of it? But if you die in your sins, how will they cry out against you in hell? "All this was wrong of you. You should have taught us better, and did not; you should have restrained us from sin, and corrected us, but did not." What an addition will such outcries be to our misery! On the other side, think what a cour-

fort you may have, if you be faithful in this duty. you should not succeed, you have freed your or souls, and have peace in your own consciences. you do, the comfort is inexpressible, in their lo and obedience, their supplying your wants, and c lighting you in all your remaining path to glor Yea, all your family may fare the better for o pious child or servant. But the greatest joy will I when you shall say, Lord, here am I, and the childr thou hast given me; and shall joyfully live with the for ever. Consider how much the welfare of chur and state depends on this duty. Good laws will n reform us, if reformation begin not at home. This the cause of all our miseries in church and sta even the want of a holy education of children. also entreat parents to consider, what excellent a vantages they have for saving their children. Th are with you while they are tender and flexib You have a twig to bend, not an oak. None in t world have such interest in their affections as y You have also the greatest authority ov Their whole dependence is upon you for maintenance. You best know their temper and clinations. And you are ever with them, and c never want opportunities. Especially, you mothe remember this, who are more with your childr while young than their fathers. What pains are y at for their bodies! What do you suffer to bri them into the world. And will you not be at much pains for the saving of their souls? Yo affections are tender; and will it not move you think of their perishing for ever? I beseech ye for the sake of the children of your bowels, tes them, admonish them, watch over them, and gi them no rest till you have brought them to Christ SECT. XX. I shall conclude with this earnest quest to all Christian parents that read these lin that they would have compassion on the souls of the poor children, and be faithful to the great trust

God hath put on them. If you cannot do what would for them, yet do what you can. Both

and state, city and country, groan under the neglect of this weighty duty. Your children know not God, nor his laws, but take his name in vain, and slight his worship, and you neither instruct them, nor correct them; and therefore God corrects both them and you. You are so tender of them, that God is the less tender of both them and you. Wonder not if God make you smart for your children's sins; for you are guilty of all they commit, by your neglect of your duty to reform them. Will you resolve therefore to set upon this duty, and neglect it no longer? Remember Eli. Your children are like Moses in the bulrushes, ready to perish if they have not help. As ever you would not be charged before God as murderers of their souls, nor have them cry out against you in everlasting fire, see that you teach them how to escape it, and bring them up in holiness and the fear of God. I charge every one of you, upon your allegiance to God, as you will very shortly answer the contrary at your peril, that you will neither refuse nor neglect this most necessary duty. If you are not willing to do it, now you know it to be so great a duty, you are rebels, and no true subjects of Jesus Christ. If you are willing, but know not how, I will add a few words of direction to help you. Lead them, by your own example, to prayer, reading, and other religious duties. their understandings. Store their memories. Rectify their wills. Quicken their affections. Keep tender their consciences. Restrain their tongues, and teach them gracious speech. Reform and watch over their outward conversation. To these ends get them Bibles and pious books, and see that they read them. Examine them often what they learn; especially spend the Lord's day in this work, and suffer them not to

spend it in sports or idleness. Show them the meaning of what they read and learn. Keep them out of

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CHAPTER X.

THE SAINTS' REST IS NOT TO BE EXPECTED ON EARTH.

SECT. I. In order to show the sin and folly of expecting rest here, SECT. II. (1.) The reasonablesses of present afflictions is considered; SECT. III. 1. That they are the way to rest; SERT. IV. 3. Keep as from mistaking our rest; SECT. VI. 4. Quicken our pace towards it; SET. VII. 5. Quicken our pace towards it; SET. VII. 5. Quicken our pace towards it; SET. VII. 5. Quicken commode our fish; SECT. VII. IX. and 6. Under them the averages forestasse of rest are often enjoyed. SET. X. II. That it is is idolatry; SECT. XII. 2. That it is is seen to see the set of the service of the set of t

SECT. I. We are not yet come to our resting-place. Doth it remain? How great then is our sin and folly to seek and expect it here. Where shall we find the Christian that deserves not this reproof? We would all have continual prosperity, because it is easy and pleasing to the flesh; but we consider not the unreasonableness of such desires. And when we enjoy convenient houses, goods, lands, and revenues, or the necessary means God hath appointed for our spiritual good, we seek rest in these enjoyments. Whether we are in an afflicted or prosperous state, it is apparent we exceedingly make the creature our rest. we not desire creature enjoyments more violently, when we want them, than we desire God himself? Do we not delight more in the possession of them, than in the enjoyment of God? And if we lose them. doth it not trouble us more than our loss of God? Is it not enough that they are refreshing helps in our way to heaven, but they must also be made our hea-Christian reader, I would as willingly ven itself? make thee sensible of this sin as of any sin in the world, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greatest quarrel with us is in this point. In order to this, I most earnestly beseech thee to consider,—the reasonableness of resting in present afflictions,—and the unreasonableness ef resting in present enjoyments;—as also of our unwillingness to die, that we may possess eternal rest.

SECT. II. 1. To show the reasonableness of present afflictions, consider,—they are the way to rest;—they keep us from mistaking our rest, and from losing our way to it;—they quicken our pace towards it;—they chiefly incommode our flesh;—and under them God's people have often the sweetest foretastes of their

SECT. III. 1. Consider that labour and trouble are

the common way to rest, both in the course of nature and grace. Can there possibly be rest without weariness? Do you not travel and toil first, and rest after? The day for labour is first, and then follows the night for rest. Why should we desire the course of grace to be perverted, any more than the course of nature? It is an established decree, "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God,"

Acts xiv. 22. And that "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Christ," 2 Tim. ii. 12. And what are we, that God's statutes should be reserved for our pleasures?

SECT. IV. 2. Afflictions are exceedingly useful to us to keep us from mistaking our rest. A Christian's motion towards heaven is voluntary, and not constrained. Those means, therefore, are most profitable which help his understanding and will. The most dangerous mistake of our souls is, to take the creature for God, and earth for heaven. What warm, affectionate, eager thoughts, have we of the world, till afflictions cool and moderate them! Afflictions speak

tionate, eager thoughts, have we of the world, till afflictions cool and moderate them! Afflictions speak convincingly, and will be heard when preachers cannot. Many a poor Christian is sometimes bending his thoughts to wealth, or flesh-pleasing, or applause, and so loses his relish of Christ, and the joy shove all God break in upon his riches, or children, or contilled.

under our head, we shall sleep out our lour glory.

SECT. V. 3. Afflictions are also G fectual means to keep us from losing ou rest. Without this hedge of thorns on t and left, we should hardly keep the wa If there be but one gap open, how rea find it, and turn out at it! When we go r worldly, or proud, how doth sickness flictions reduce us! Every Christian, a ther, may call affliction one of the best st and with David may say, "Before I wi went astray, but now have I kept thy 1 cxix. 97. Many thousand recovered cry, "O healthful sickness! O comforts O gainful losses! O enriching poverty day that ever I was afflicted!" Not on pastures, and still waters, but the rod ar comfort us. Though the word and spiritwork, yet suffering so unbolts the door that the word hath easier entraped.

speedily in the way to heaven in thy sufferings, than in thy more pleasing and prosperous state.

SECT. VII. 5. Consider further, it is but the flesh that is chiefly troubled and grieved by afflictions. In most of our sufferings the soul is free, unless we ourselves wilfully afflict it. "Why then, O my soul, dost thou side with this flesh, and complain as it complaineth? It should be thy work to keep it under, and bring it into subjection; and if God do it for thee, shouldst thou be discontented? Hath not the pleasing of it been the cause of almost all thy spiritual sorrows? Why then may not the displeasing of it further thy joy? Must not Paul and Silas sing because their feet are in the stocks? Their spirits were not imprisoned. Ah, unworthy soul! is this thy thanks to God for preferring thee so far before thy body? When it is rotting in the grave, thou shalt be a companion of the perfected spirits of the just; in the mean time, hast thou not consolation which the flesh knows not of? Murmur not then at God's dealings with thy body: if it were for want of love to thee, he would not have dealt so by all his saints. Never expect thy flesh should truly expound the meaning of the rod. It will call love, hatred; and say, God is destroying, when he is saving. It is the suffering party, and therefore not fit to be the judge." Could we once believe God, and judge of his dealings by his word, and by their usefulness to our souls, and reference to our rest, and could we stop our ears against all the clamours of the flesh, then we should have a truer judgment of our afflictions.

SECT. VIII. 6. Once more consider, God seldom gives his people so sweet a foretaste of their future rest, as in their deep afflictions. He keeps his most precious cordials for the time of our greatest faintings and dangers. He gives them when he knows they

heaven openeu, pur for the testimony of Jesus? Is not that o wherein we have most of God? Why els sire to come to heaven? If we look for fleshly delights, we shall find ourselve Conclude, then, that affliction is not so for a saint in his way to rest. Are we God? Doth he not know what is good f as we? or is he not as careful of our goof our own? Woe to us, if he were not m and if he did not love us better than w him or ourselves! SECT. IX. Say not, "I could bear fliction but this." If God had afflicted thou canst bear it, thy idol would neith

discovered nor removed. Neither s would deliver me out of it, I could be c it." Is it nothing that he hath prom work for thy good? Is it not enough sure to be delivered at death? Nor "If my affliction did not disable me fro

To doth not disable the

blessing you may expect; and the more you suffer for your own evil doing, the longer it will be before that sweetness comes. Are not the comforts you desire neglected or resisted? Have your afflictions wrought kindly with you, and fitted you for comfort? It is not suffering that prepares you for comfort, but the success and fruit of suffering upon your hearts.

hearts.

SECT. X. (II.) To show the unreasonableness of resting in present enjoyments, consider—it is idolizing them; it contradicts God's end in giving them; it is the way to have them refused, withdrawn, or imbittered; to be suffered to take up our rest here is the greatest curse; it is seeking rest where it is not to be found; the creatures, without God, would aggravate our misery; and to confirm all this, we may consult our own experience, and that of others.

may consult our own experience, and that of others. SECT. XI. 1. It is gross idolatry to make any creature or means our rest. To be the rest of the soul, is God's own prerogative. As it is apparent idolatry to place our rest in riches or honours, so it is but a more refined idolatry to take up our rest in excellent means of grace. How ill must our dear Lord take it, when we give him cause to complain, as he did of our fellow-idolaters, "My people have been lost sheep, they have forgotten their restingplace," Jer. l. 6. "My people can find rest in any thing, rather than in me. They can delight in one another, but not in me. They can rejoice in my creatures and ordinances, but not in me. Yea, in their very labours and duties they seek for rest, but not in me. They had rather be anywhere, than be with me. Are these their gods? Have these rethee to him; and dost thou take up with them in his stead? He gave them to be refreshments in thy journey; and wouldst thou dwell in thy inn, and ge no further? It may be said of all our comforts and ordinances, as it is said of the Israelites, "The ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them, to search out a resting-place for them," Numb. z. 33. So do all God's mercies here. They are not that rest; as John professed he was not the Christ; but they are voices crying in this wilderness, to bid us prepare, for the kingdom of God, our true rest, is at hand. Therefore, to rest here were to turn all mercies contrary to their own ends, and to our own advantages, and to destroy ourselves with that which should

help us. SECT. XIII. 3. It is the way to cause God either to deny the mercies we ask, or to take from us those we enjoy, or at least to imbitter them to us. God is nowhere so jealous as here. If you had a servant whom your wife loved better than yourself, would you not take it ill of such a wife, and rid your house of such a servant? so, if the Lord see you begin to settle in the world, and say, "Here I will rest," no wonder if he soon in his jealousy unsettle you. If he love you, no wonder if he take that from you with which he sees you are destroying yourselves. It hath long been my observation of many, that when they have attempted great works, and have just finished them; or have aimed at great things in the world, and have just obtained them; or have lived in much trouble, and have just overcome it; and began to look on their condition with content, and rest in it; they are then usually near to death or When a man is once at this language, Soul, take thy ease; the next news usually is, Thou fool, this night, or this month, or this year, thy soul shall be required; and then whose shall these things be? What house is there, where this fool dwelleth not? Let you and I consider, whether it be not our own Many a servant of God hath been destroyed rom the earth, by being over-valued, and over loved. I am persuaded our discontents and murmurings are not so provoking to God, nor so destructive to the sinner, as our too sweet enjoying, and resting in, a pleasant state. If God hath crossed you in wife, children, goods, friends, either by taking them away, or the comfort of them; try whether this be not the cause; for wheresoever your desires stop, and you say, "Now I am well," that condition you make your god, and engage the jealousy of God against it. Whether you be friends to God or enemies, you can never expect that God should suffer you quietly to enjoy your idols.

Sect. XIV. 4. Should God suffer you to take up your rest here, it is one of the greatest curses that could befal you. It were better never to have a day of ease in the world; for then weariness might make you seek after true rest. But if you are suffered to sit down and rest here, a restless wretch you will be through all eternity. To have their portion in this life is the lot of the most miserable perishing sinners. Doth it become Christians, then, to expect so much here? Our rest is our heaven; and where we take our rest, there we make our heaven. And wouldst thou have but such a heaven as this?

SECT. XV. 5. It is seeking rest where it is not to be found. Your labour will be lost, and, if you proceed, your soul's eternal rest too. Our rest is only in the full obtaining of our ultimate end. But that is not to be expected in this life; neither is rest therefore to be expected here. Is God to be enjoyed in the best church here, as he is in heaven? How little of God the saints enjoy under the best means, let their own complainings testify. Poor comforters are the best ordinances, without God. Should a traveller take up his rest in the way? No, because his home is his journey's end. When you have all here.

sours, and to trou; and what a dear or work pect of each of these, doth lie before us? we rest in the midst of all our labours? In may rest on earth, as the ark is said to have in the midst of Jordan; a short and small re as Abraham desired the angels to turn in, a themselves in his tent, where they would have loath to have take up their dwelling. Should have fixed their rest in the wilderness, amo pents, and enemies, and weariness, and f Should Noah have made the ark his home, as been loath to come forth when the waters w suaged? Should the mariner choose his d on the sea, and settle his rest in the midst of and sands, and raging tempests? Should a rest in the thickest of his enemies? And Christians such travellers, such mariners, st diers? Have you not fears within, and without? Are we not in continual dangers cannot eat, drink, sleep, labour, pray, hear, co but in the midst of snares; and shall we sit do and depart, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted," Micah ii. 10. These things cannot in their nature be a true Christian's rest. They are too poor to make us rich, too low to raise us to happiness, too empty to fill our souls, and of too short a continuance to be our eternal content. If prosperity, and whatsoever we here desire, be too base to make gods of, they are too base to be our rest. The soul's rest must be sufficient to afford it perpetual satisfaction. But the content which creatures afford waxes old, and abates after a short enjoyment. If God should rain down angels' food, we should soon loath the manna. If novelty support not, our delights on earth grow dull. All creatures are to us, as the flowers to the bee; there is but little honey on any one, and therefore there must be a superficial taste, and so to the next. The more the creature is known, the less it satisfieth. Those only are taken with it,

who see no further than its outward beauty, without discerning its inward vanity. When we thoroughly know the condition of other men, and have discovered the evil as well as the good, and the defects as

well as the perfections, we then cease our admira-

SECT. XVI. 6. To have creatures and means without God, is an aggravation of our misery. If God should say, "Take my creatures, my word, my servants, my ordinances, but not myself;" would you take this for happiness? If you had the word of God, and not the Word which is God; or the bread of the Lord, and not the Lord, which is the true bread; or could cry with the Jews, The temple of the Lord, and had not the Lord of the temple; this were a poor bappiness. Was Capernaum the more happy, or the more miserable, for seeing the mighty works which they had seen, and heaving the words of Christ which they did hear? Surely that which aggravates our sin and misery eannot be out

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rest.

our own and others' experience.

Solve trial; but did any ever find a sufficient rest be trial; but did any ever find a sufficient rest bis soul on earth? Delights I deny not but they have never find, but rest and satisfaction that which never found, but rest and satisfaction that which never found, and shall we think to find that which never with the satisfaction that which never othing to him without Naboth's vineyard; are you would find be obtained it? Were you will rest satisfy him when he obtained it? Were you hat satisfy him when he obtained the earth for othing to him when he obtained the earth for what satisfy him when he obtained the satisfy rest would return confessing rest here? Go ask honour, is there temperature resting-place, you would rest on the top of temperature you may as well rest on the top of the temperature. You may as well rest on the top of the temperature and the satisfy have been as the satisfy here? Even such is in as bed of thors. The rest of worldly pleasure, it is such as the part of the part

yet how guilty are the generality of us of this sin How many halts and stops do we make, before w will make the Lord our rest? How must God even drive us, and fire us out of every condition, lest we should sit down and rest there! If he gives us prosperity, riches, or honour, we do in our hearts dance before them, as the Israelites before their calf, and say, These are thy gods, and conclude it is good to be here. If he imbitter all these to us, how restless are we till our condition be sweetened, that we may sit down again, and rest where we were! If we proceed in the cure, and take the creatures quite away, then how do we labour, and cry, and pray, that God would restore it, that we may make it our rest again! And while we are deprived of our former idol, yet rather than come to God we delight ourselves, in the hope of recovering it, and make that very hope our rest: or search about from creature to creature, to find out something to supply the room; yea, if we can find 10 supply, yet we will rather settle in this misery, and nake rest of a wretched being, than leave all and ome to God. O the cursed averseness of our souls om God! If any place in hell were tolerable, the ul would rather take up its rest there, than come God. Yea, when he is bringing us over to him, d hath convinced us of the worth of his ways and vice, the last deceit of all is here, we will rather tle upon those ways that lead to him, and those inances that speak of him, and those gifts which from him, than we will come entirely over to self. Christians, marvel not that I speak so much esting in these; beware lest it prove thy own I suppose thou art so far convinced of the y of riches, honour, and pleasure, that thou

more easily disclaim these; and

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sult our own and others' experience. Millions have made trial; but did any ever find a sufficient rest for his soul on earth? Delights I deny not but they have found, but rest and satisfaction they have never found. And shall we think to find that which never any man could find before us? Ahab's kingdom is nothing to him without Naboth's vineyard; and did

that satisfy him when he obtained it? Were you like Noah's dove, to look through the earth for a resting-place, you would return confessing that you could fine none. Go ask honour, is there rest here? You may as well rest on the top of tempestuous mountains, or on Etna's flames. Ask riches, is there rest here? Even such is in a bed of thorns. If von inquire for rest of worldly pleasure, it is such as the fish hath in swallowing the bait; when the pleasure is sweetest, death is nearest. Go to learning, and even to divine ordinances, and inquire whether there your souls may rest? You might indeed receive from these an olive branch of hope, as they are means to your rest, and have relation to eternity: but in regard of any satisfaction in themselves, you should remain as restless as ever. How well might all these answer us, as Jacob did Rachel, Am I in God's stead, that you come to me for soul-rest? Not all the states of men in the world; neither court nor country, town nor cities, shops nor fields, treasures, libraries, solitude, society, studies, nor pulpits, can afford any such thing as this rest. If you would inquire of the dead of all generations, or of the living through all dominions, they would tell you, " Here is no rest." Or if other men's experience move you not, take a view of your own. Can you remember the state that did fully satisfy you? Or, if you could, will it prove lasting? I believe we may all say of our earthly rest, as Paul of our hope, If it were in this life only, we are of all men the most miserable.

Secr. XVIII. If then neither Scripture nor reason.
nor the experience of ourselves, and all the world, will
satisfy us, we may see there is no resting here. An

clean lusts, a fountain so incessantly streamling forth the bitter waters of transgression, and art thou not yet weary? Wretched soul! Hast thou beem so long wounded in all thy faculties, so grievously languishing in all thy performances, so fruitful a soil of all iniquities, and art thou yet more weary? Wouldst thou still lie under thy imperfections? Hath thy sin proved so profitable a commodity, so necessary a companion, such a delightful employment, that thou dost so much dread the parting day? May not God justly grant thee thy wishes, and seal thee a lease of thy desired distance from him, and nail thy ears to these doors of misery, and exclude thee eternally from his glory?" It shows that we are insensible of the vanity of the creature, when we are so loath to hear or think of a removal. "Ah foolish, wretched soul, doth every prisoner groan for free-dom? and every slave desire his jubilee? and every sick man long for health? and every hungry man for food? and dost thou alone abhor deliverance? Doth the sailor wish to see the land? Doth the husbandman desire the harvest, and the labourer to receive his pay? Doth the traveller long to be at home, and the racer to win the prize, and the soldier to win the field? And art thou loath to see thy labours finished, and to receive the end of thy faith and sufferings? Have thy griefs been only dreams? they were, yet methinks thou shouldst not be afraid of waking. Or is it not rather the world's delights that are all mere dreams and shadows? Or is the world become of late more kind? We may at our peril reconcile ourselves to the world, but it will never reconcile itself to us. O unworthy soul! who hadst rather dwell in this land of darkness, and wander in this barren wilderness, than be at rest with Jesus Christ! who hadst rather stay among the wolves, and daily suffer the scorpion's stings, than praise the Lord with the host of heaven.

SECT. XX. This unwillingness to die doth actually impeach us of high treason against the Lord. is it not choosing of earth before him, and taking of

present things for our happiness, and consequently making them our very god? If we did indeed make God our end, our rest, our portion, our treasure, how is it possible but we should desire to enjoy him? It moreover discovers our dissimulation. Would you have any believe you, when you call the Lord your only hope, and speak of Christ as all in all, and of the joy that is in his presence, and yet would endure the hardest life, rather than die and enter into his presence? What self-contradiction is this, to talk so hardly of the world and the flesh, to groan and complain of sin and suffering; and yet fear no day more than that which we expect should bring our final freedom! What hypocrisy is this, to profess to strive and fight for heaven which we are loath to come to! and spend one hour after another in prayer, for that which we would not have. Hereby we wrong the Lord and his promises, and disgrace his ways in the eyes of the world. As if we would persuade them to question, whether God be true to his word or not? Whether there be any such glory as the Scripture mentions? When they see those so loath to leave their hold of present things, who have professed to live by faith, and have boasted of their hopes in another world, and spoken disgracefully of all things below in comparison of things above; how doth this confirm the world in their unbelief and sensuality? "Sure," say they, "if these professors did expect so much glory, and make so light of the world as they seem, they would not themselves be so loath to change." O how are we ever able to repair the wrong which we do to God and souls by this scandal? And what an honour to God, what a strengthening to believers, what a conviction to unbelievers would it be, if Christians in this did answer their profession, and cheerfully welcome the news of rest? It also evidently shows that we have spent much time to little purpose; Have we not all had our lifetime to prepare to die? So many years to make ready for one hour, and are we so unready and unwilling yet? What have we

to mind? Would work hath How oft twarnings? How oft hath How oft intations of our neighbours? nutions of our neignbours; How many distempers have our bodies, that we have been forced to redown our podies, that we have been forced to re-the sentence of death! And are we unready unwilling after all this? O careless, death huma fast, unwilling after all tills? Carrends, desired sinners! unworthy neglecters of God's warncurs had Al faithless betrayers of our own sous!

SECT. XXI. Consider, not to die, of blessedness;

PPY,—to escape death, is to miss Enoch and Eliciphy.

The second death is to miss Enoch and in this is never enough this in this is never enough this is never enough this in this is never enough this is never enough this in this is never enough the interest enough this is never enough the interest enough this is never enough this in this is never enough this in this is never enough the enough this is never enough the e bide slig th, which he never did before or since. If in this if only we have hope in Christ, we are, of all most most miserable. If you would not die, and go to most miserable. If you would not die, and go to heaven, what would you have more than an epicure, or a beast? Why do we pray, and fast, and mounts of a beast? Why do we suffer the contempt of the world? Why are we Christians, and not pagyms and infidels, if we are we Christians, and not pagyms do not desire a life to come? All thy duties and do not desire a life to come? All thy duties and labour, faith and labour, of thy life, and all the factorial contented with the nortion of a worldonstended with the portion of a world-Say as one did on his death he was willing to die

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these sinners suffer? If they value their flesh above their spirits, and their lusts above my Father's love; if they will sell their souls for nought: who is it fit should be the loser? Should I, whom they have wronged? Must they wilfully transgress my law, and I undergo their deserved pain? Must I come

down from heaven to earth, and clothe myself with human flesh, be spit upon and scorned by man, and fast, and weep, and suffer, and bleed, and die a cursed death; and all this for wretched worms, who had rather hazard their souls, than forbear one forbidden morsel? Do they cast away themselves so slightly, and must I redeem them so dearly? Thus

we see Christ had reason enough to have made him

unwilling; and yet did he voluntarily condescend. But we have no reason against our coming to him; except we will reason against our hopes, and plead for the perpetuity of our calamities. Christ came down to fetch us up; and would we have him to lose his blood and labour, and go again without us? Hath he bought our rest at so dear a rate? Is our inheritance purchased with his blood? And are we, after all this, loath to enter? Ah, sirs! it was Christ

and not we, that had cause to be loath. May the Lord forgive and heal this foolish ingratitude! SECT. XXII. Do we not combine with our most cruel foes, in their most malicious designs, while we are loath to die, and go to heaven? What is the devil's daily business? Is it not to keep our souls from God? And shall we be content with this? Is it not the one half of hell which we wish to ourselves.

while we desire to be absent from heaven? What sport is this to Satan, that his desires and thine, Christian, should so concur!—that when he sees he cannot get thee to hell, he can so long keep thee out of heaven, and make thee the earnest petitioner for it thyself! O gratify not the devil so much to thy

bliss; how do we fill them up with causeless terror? Thus we consume our own comforts, and prey upon our truest pleasure. When we might lie down, and rise up, and walk abroad, with our hearts full of the joys of God, we continually fill them with perplexing fears. For he that fears dying must be always fearing, because he hath always reason to expect it. And how can that man's life be comfortable, who lives in continual fear of losing his comforts. not these fears of death self-created sufferings? As it God had not inflicted enough upon us, but we must inflict more upon ourselves. Is not death hitter enough to the flesh of itself, but we must double and treble its bitterness? The sufferings laid upon us by God do all lead to happy issues: the progress is from tribulation to patience, from thence to experience, and so to hope, and at last to glory. But the sufferings we make for ourselves are circular and endless,from sin to suffering, from suffering to sin, and so to suffering again. And not only so, but they multiply in their course; every sin is greater than the former, and so every suffering also; so that, except we think God hath made us to be our own tormentors, we have small reason to nourish our fears of death. And are they not useless, unprofitable fears? As all our care cannot make one hair white or black, nor add one cubit to our stature; so neither can our fear prevent our sufferings, nor delay our death one hour: willing or unwilling, we must away. Manya man's fears have hastened his end, but no man's ever did avert it. It is true, a cautious fear concerning the danger after death hath profited many, and is very useful to the preventing of that danger; but for a member of Christ and an heir of heaven to be afraid of entering his own inheritance, is a sinful and useless fear. And do not our fears of dying insnare our souls, and add strength to many temptations? What made Peter deny his Lord? What made apostates in suffering times forsake the truth? Why doth the green blade of unrooted faith wither before the heat of persecution? Fear of imprisonment and poverty may do much, but fear of death will do much more. So much fear as we have of death, so much cowardice we usually have in the cause of God. Beside the multitude of unbelieving contrivances, and discontents at the wise disposal of God, and hard thoughts of most of his providences, which this sin doth make us guilty of.

SECT. XXIII. Let us farther consider what a competent time most of us have had. Why should not a man that would die at all be as willing at thirty or forty, if God see fit, as at seventy or eighty? Length of time doth not conquer corruption; it never withers or decays through age. Except we receive an addition of grace, as well as time, we naturally grow worse. "O my soul, depart in peace." As thou wouldst not desire an unlimited state in wealth and honour, so desire it not in point of time. If thou wast sensible how little thou deservest an hour of that patience which thou hast enjoyed, thou wouldst think thou hadst had a large part. Is it not Divine wisdom that sets the bounds? God will honour himself by various persons and several ages, and not by one person or age. Seeing thou hast acted thy own part, and finished thy appointed course, come down contentedly, that others may succeed, who must have their turns as well as thyself. Much time hath much duty. Beg therefore for grace to improve it better; but be content with thy share of time. Thou hast also had a competency of the comforts of life. God might have made thy life a burden, till thou hadst been as weary of possessing it, as thou art now afraid of losing it. He might have suffered thee to have consumed thy days in ignorance without the true knowledge of Christ; but he hath opened thy eyes in the morning of thy days, and acquainted thee betimes with the business of thy life. Hath they heavenly Father caused thy lot to fall in Europe not in Asia, Africa, or America; in England, not in

not in Asia, Africa, or America; in England, not in Spain or Italy? Hath he filled up all thy life with mercies, and dost thou now think thy share to small? What a multitude of hours of consolations.

of delightful Sabbaths, of pleasant studies, of precious companions, of wonderful deliverances, of excellent opportunities, of fruitful labours, of joyful tidings, of sweet experiences, of astonishing providences, hath thy life partaken of! Hath thy life been so sweet, that thou art loath to leave it? Is this thy thanks to him, who is thus drawing thee to his own sweetness? O foolish soul! would thou wast as covetous after eternity, as thou art for fading, perishing life! and after the presence of God in glory, as thou art for continuance on earth. Then thou wouldst cry, "Why wheels of his chariot? How long, Lord? how long?"

What if God should let thee live many years, but deny thee the mercies which thou hast hitherto enjoyed? Might he not give thee life, as he gave the murmuring Israelites quails? He might give thee life till thou wert weary of living, and as glad to be rid of it as Judas or Ahithophel; and make thee like many miserable creatures in the world, who can hardly forbear laying violent hands on themselves. Be not therefore so importunate for life, which may prove a judgment instead of a blessing. How many of the precious servants of God, of all ages and places, have gone before thee! Thou art not to enter an untrodden path, nor appointed first to break the ice. Except Enoch and Elijah, which of the saints have escaped death? And art thou better than they? There are many millions of saints dead, more than now remain on earth. What a number of thine own bosom friends and companions in duty are gone; and why shouldst thou be so loath to follow? Nay, hath not Jesus Christ himself gone this way? Hath he not sanctified the grave to us, and perfumed the dust with his own body: and art thou loath to follow him too? Rather say as Thomas, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

SECT. XXIV. If what hath been said will not persuade, Scripture and reason have little force. And I have said the more on this subject, finding it needful to myself and others; finding among so

many Christians, who could do and suffer much for Christ, so few that can willingly die; and of many, who have somewhat subdued other corruptions, so few have got the conquest of this. I persuade not the ungodly from fearing death. It is a wonder that they fear it no more, and spend not their days in continual horror.

CHAPTER XI.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADING A HEAVENLY LIFE UPON EARTH.

SECT I. The reasonableness of delighting in the thoughts of the saints' rest. SECT, II. Christians exhorted to it by considering, SECT, III. I. It will evidence their sincers plety; SECT, IV. 2. It is the highest excellence of the Christian temper: SECT, V. 3. It leads to the most comfortable life; SECT, VI.—IX. 4. It will be the best preservative from temptations to sin; SECT, X. 5. It will invigorate their graces and duties; SECT, XI. 6. It will be their best cordial in all affiliations: SECT, XII. 7. It will render them most profitable to others; SECT, XII. And III. All their control of the SECT, SECT, A. II. All their control of the SECT, A. II. All their control of the Word of God; SECT, XVI. 10. It is the more reasonable to have our hearts with God, as his is so much on us; SECT, XVII. and II. In heaven, where we have so much interest and relation; SECT, XVIII. III. SECT, SEC

SECT. I. Is there such a rest remaining for us? Why then are our thoughts no more upon it? why are not our hearts continually there? why dwell we not there in constant contemplation? what is the cause of this neglect? Are we reasonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us such a glory, and promised to take us to dwell with himself, and is not this worth thinking on? Should not the strongest desire of our hearts be after it? Do we believe this, and yet forget and neglect it? If God will not give us leave to approach this light, what mean all his earnest invitations? Why dock he so condemn our earthly-mindedness, and comments to set our affections on things above!

hearts! If God be against it, we were likelier t for it; but when he commands our hearts to hea then they will not stir one inch. Like our p cessors, the sinful Israelites, when God would I them march for Canaan, then they mutiny, and not stir; but when God bids them not go, then will be presently marching. If God say, "Leve the world, nor the things of the world," we dote t it. How freely, how frequently can we think of pleasures, our friends, our labours, our fiesh an lusts, yea, our wrongs and miseries, our fears sufferings! but where is the Christian whose ! is on his rest? What is the matter! Are we se of joy as to need no more? Or, is there nothin heaven for our joyous thoughts! Or, rather, are our hearts carnal and stupid? Let us humble t sensual hearts, that have in them no more of C and glory. If this world were the only subject our discourse, all would count us ungodly, why may we not call our hearts ungodly, that hav little delight in Christ and heaven.

SECT. II. But I am speaking only to those w portion is in keaven, whose hopes are there, and have forsaken all to enjoy this glory; and shall discouraged from persuading such to be heave minded? Fellow-Christians, if you will not and obey, who will? Well may we be discour to exhort the blind ungodly world, and may se Moses did, "Behold the children of Israel have hearkened unto me, how then shall Pharoah hear n I require thee, reader, as ever thou hopest for a in this glory, that thou presently take thy hear task, chide it for its wilful strangeness to God, thy thoughts from the pursuit of vanity, bend soul to study eternity, busy it about the life to co habituate thyself to such contemplations, and le these thoughts be seldom and cursory, but bathe soul in heaven's delights; and if thy backward begin to flag, and thy thoughts to scatter, call back, hold them to their work, bear not wit aziness, nor connive at one neglect. And wh

hast, in obedience to God, tried this work, got acquainted with it, and kept guard on thy thought till they are accustomed to obey, thou wilt then find thyself in the suburbs of heaven, and that there is indeed a sweetness in the work and way of God, and that the life of Christianity is a life of joy. Thou wilt meet with those abundant consolations which thou hast prayed, panted, and groaned after, and which so few Christians do ever here obtain, because they know not this way to them, or else make not conscience of walking in it. Say not, "We are unable to set our own hearts on heaven; this must be the work of God only." Though God be the chief disposer of your hearts, yet next under him you have the greatest command of them yourselves. Though without Christ you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much, and must, or else it will be undone, and yourselves undone through your neglect. Christians, if your souls were healthful and vigorous, they would perceive incomparably more delight and sweetness in the believing joyful thoughts of your future blessedness, than the sound-est stomach finds in its food, or the strongest senses in the enjoyment of their objects: so little painful would this work be to you. But because I know, while we have flesh about us, and any remains of that carnal mind, which is enmity to God and to this noble work, that all motives were little enough, I will here lay down some considerations, which, if you will deliberately weigh with an impartial judgment, I doubt not but they will prove effectual with your hearts, and make you resolve on this excellent duty. More particularly consider, it will evidence your sincere piety: it is the highest excellence of the Christian temper; it is the way to live most comfortably; it will be the best preservative from temptations to sin; it will enliven your graces and duties; it will be your best cordial in all afflictions; it will render you most profitable to others; it will honour Ged; without it you will disobey the commands, and lose the most gracious and delightful discoveries of the Word of God; it is also the more reasonable to have your hearts with God, as his is so much on you; and in heaven, where you have so much interest and

relation; besides, there is nothing but heaven worth setting your hearts upon. SECT. III. 1. Consider a heart set upon heaven will be one of the most unquestionable evidences of your sincerity, and a clear discovery of a true work of saving grace upon your souls. You are often asking, "How shall we know that we are truly sanctified?" Here you have a sign infallible from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Matt. vi. 21. God is the saints' treasure and happiness: heaven is the place where they must fully enjoy him. A heart therefore set upon heaven is no more but a heart set upon God; and surely a heart set upon God through Christ is the truest evidence of saving grace. When learning will be no proof of grace; when knowledge, duties, gifts will fail; when arguments from thy tongue or hand may be confuted; yet then will this, from the bent of thy heart, prove thee sincere. Take a poor Christian, of a weak understanding, a feeble memory, a stammering tongue, yet his heart is on God, he hath chosen him for his portion, his thoughts are on eternity, his desires are there, he cries out, "O that I were there!" He takes that day for a time of imprisonment, in which he hath not had one refreshing view of eternity. I had rather die in this man's condition, than in the case of him who hath the most eminent gifts, and is most admired for his performances, while his heart is not thus taken up with God. The man that Christ will find out at the last, day, and condemn for want of a weddinggarment, will be one that wants this frame of heart. The question will not then be, How much have you

known, or professed, or talked? but how much have you loved, and where was your heart? Christians, us you would have a proof of your title to glory labour to get your hearts above. If sin and Satan keep not your affections from thence, they will never

be able to keep away your persons.

SECT. IV. 2. A heart in heaven is the highest excellence of your Christian temper. As there is a common excellence by which Christians differ from the world; so there is this peculiar dignity of spirit. by which the more excellent differ from the rest. As the noblest of creatures, so the noblest of Christians, are they whose faces are set most direct for heaven. Such a heavenly saint who hath been wrapt up to God in his contemplations, and is newly come down from the views of Christ, what discoveries will he make of those superior regions! how high and sacred is his discourse! enough to convince an understanding hearer that he hath seen the Lord, and that no man could speak such words, except he had been with God. This, this is the noble Christian. The most famous mountains and trees are those that reach nearest to heaven, and he is the choicest Christian whose heart is most frequently and most delightfully there. If a man have lived near the king, or hath seen the sultan of Persia, or the great Turk, he will be thought a step higher than his neighbours. What then shall we judge of him that daily travels as far as heaven, and there hath seen the King of kings, hath frequent admittance into the Divine presence, and feasteth his soul upon the tree of life! For my part, I value this man before the noblest, the richest, or the most learned in the world.

SECT. V. 3. A heavenly mind is the nearest and truest way to a life of comfort. The countries far north are cold and frozen, because they are distant from the sun. What makes such frozen uncomfortable Christians, but their living so far from heaven? And what makes others so warm in comforts, but their living higher, and having nearer access to God? When the sun in the spring draws nearer our part of the earth, how do all things congratulate its approach! The earth looks green, the trees show forth, the plants revive, the birds sing, and all things constructions.

joy would be within us! How should we forget our winter sorrows! How early should we rise to sing the praise of our great Creator! O Christians, get above. Those that have been there, have found it warmer; and I doubt not but thou hast sometime tried it thyself. When have you largest comforts? Is it not when thou hast conversed with God, and talked with the inhabitants of the higher world, and viewed their mansions, and filled thy soul with the forethoughts of glory? If thou knowest by experience what this practice is, I dare say thou knowest what spiritual joy is. If, as David professes, "the light of God's countenance more gladdens the heart than corn and wine," then, surely, they that draw nearest, and most behold it, must be fullest of these joys. Whom should we blame, then, that we are so void of consolation, but our own negligent hearts? God hath provided us a crown of glory, and promised shortly to set it on our heads, and we will not so much as think of it. He bids us behold and rejoice, and we will not so much as look at it; and yet we complain for want of comfort. It is by believing we are filled with joy and peace, and no longer than we continue believing. It is in hope the saints re-joice, and no longer than they continue hoping. God's spirit worketh our comforts, by setting our own spirits on work upon the promises, and raising our thoughts to the place of our comforts. As you would delight a covetous man by showing him gold; so God delights his people by leading them, as it were, into heaven, and showing them himself, and their rest with him. He does not cast in our joys while we are idle, or taken up with other things. He gives the fruits of the earth, while we plough, and sow, and weed, and water, and dung, and dress, and with patience expect his blessing; so doth he give the joys of the soul. I entreat thee, reader, in the name of the Lord, and as thou valuest the life of constant Joy, and that good conscience which is a continue few love the way to poy, ... which it is obtained; they will take the comes to hand, and content themselves w pleasure, rather than they will ascend to seek it; and yet when all is done, they it there, or be without it.

SECT. VI. 4. A heart in heaven will excellent preservative against temptation will keep the heart well employed. Widle, we tempt the devil to tempt us; as sons make thieves. A heart in heaven the tempter, as Nehemiah did, "I am of work, so that I cannot come." It hath be lustful or wanton, ambitious or wor were but busy in your lawful calling not be so ready to hearken to tempt less if you were also huss above with

less if you were also busy above with a judge be persuaded to rise from the he is aitting upon life and death, to go children in the streets? No more will when he is taking a survey of his

-- to the alluring charms of Sata

- ELEMEN

his temptations, and the ordinary bait; and ho these ensuare the Christian, who hath left the and walks with God? Is converse with wis the way to make one wise? much more is co with God. If travellers return home with v and experience, how much more he that traheaven? If our bodies are suited to the air a mate we most live in; his understanding m fuller of light, who lives with the Father of The men of the world that dwell below, and no other conversation but earthly, no wonder i understanding be darkened, and Satan takes captive at his will. How can worms and mol whose dwelling is always in the earth! Whi dust is in their eyes, no wonder they mistak for godliness, sin for grace, the world for God own wills for the law of Christ, and, in the hell for heaven. But when a Christian with himself from his worldly thoughts, and beg converse with God in heaven, methinks he Nebuchadnezzar, taken from the beasts of th to the throne, and his reason returneth to When he hath had a glimpse of eternity, and down on the world again, how doth he charg folly his neglects of Christ, his fleshly pleasur earthly cares! How doth he say to his laughte mad! How doth he verily think there is no 1 bedlam so truly mad as wilful sinners, and unv slighters of Christ and glory! This makes a man usually wiser than others, because he lo eternity as near, and hath more heart-pi thoughts of it than he ever had in health and Then many of the most bitter enen perity. the saints have their eyes opened, and, like B ery out, "O that I might die the death of the cous, and that my last end might be like his!" let the same men recover, and lose their app sions of the life to come, and how quickly do lose they understandings with it? Tell a do ner of the riches, honours, or pleasures of the and would be not answer, "What is all t

who must presently appear before God, and give an account of all my life?" Christian, if the apprehended nearness of eternity will work such strange effects upon the ungodly, and make them so much wiser than before; O what rare effects would it produce in thee, if thou couldst always dwell in the views of God, and in lively thoughts of thy everlasting state! Surely a believer, if he improve his faith, may ordinarily have more quickening apprehensions of the life to come, in the time of his health, than an

unbeliever hath at the hour of his death.

SECT. VIII. A heavenly mind is also fortified against temptations, because the affections are thoroughly prepossessed with the high delights of another world. He that loves most, and not he that only knows most, will most easily resist the emotions of sin. The will doth as sweetly relish goodness, as the understanding doth truth; and here lies much of a Christian's strength. When thou hast had a fresh delightful taste of heaven, thou wilt not be so easily persuaded from it. You cannot persuade a child to part with his sweetmeats, while the taste is in his mouth. O that you would be much on feeding on the hidden manna, and frequenty tasting the delights of heaven! How would this confirm thy resolutions, and make thee despise the fooleries of the world, and scorn to be cheated with such childish toys. Had the devil set upon Peter in the mount of transfiguration, when he saw Moses and Elias talking with Christ, would he so easily have been drawn to deny his Lord? What, with all that glory in his eye? No. So, if he should set upon a believing soul, when he is taken up in the mount with Christ, what would such a soul say: "Get thee behind me Satan: Wouldst thou persuade me hence with trifling pleasures, and steal my heart from this my rest? Wouldst thou have me to sell these joys for nothing? is any honour or delight like this? or can that be profitfor which I must lose this?" But Satan stays till we are come down, and the taste of heaven out of our mouths, and the glory we saw is even forgotten, and then he easily deceives our hearts. Though Israelites below eat and drink, and rise up and pi before their idol, Moses in the mount will not do O, if we could keep the taste of our souls continue delighted with the sweetness above, with what dain should we spit out the baits of sin!

BLANCE OF BUREAU

dain should we spit out the baits of sin! SECT. IX. Besides, whilst the heart is set heaven, a man is under God's protection. If Sa then assaults us, God is more engaged for our fence, andwill doubtless stand by us and say, " grace is sufficient for thee." When a man is in way of God's blessing, he is in the less danger of s enticing. Amidst thy temptations, Christian read use much this powerful remedy:-keep close v God by a heavenly mind; follow your business abwith Christ, and you will find this a surer help the any other. "The way of life is above to the w that he may depart from hell beneath," Prov. xv. Remember that Noah was a just man, and perfect his generation; for he walked with God: and t God said to Abraham, "Walk before me, and be the

perfect." SECT. X. 5. The diligent keeping your her in heaven will maintain the vigour of all your grad and put life into all your duties. The heave Christian is the lively Christian. It is onr stran ness to heaven that makes us so dull. How will soldier hazard his life, and the mariner pass through storms and waves, and no difficulty keep them ba when they think of an uncertain perishing treasu What life, then, would it put into a Christian's end vours, if he would frequently think of his everlast treasure! We run so slowly, and strive so laz because we so little mind the prize. Observe the man who is much in heaven, and you shall he is not like other Christians: there is something what he hath seen above appeareth in all his d and conversation. If a preacher, how heavenly his sermons! If a private Christian, what hea employment, and others will see the face

conversation shine, and say, surely he hath been with God on the mount. But if you lie complaining of deadness and dulness; that you cannot love Christ, nor rejoice in his love; that you have no life in prayer, nor any other duty, and yet neglect this quickening employment; you are the cause of your own complaints. Is not thy life hid with Christ in God? Where must thou go but to Christ for it? And where is that, but to heaven, where Christ is? Thou wilt not come to Christ, that thou mayest have life. If thou wouldst have life, and heat, why art thou no more in the sunshine? For want of this recourse to heaven, thy soul is as a lamp not lighted, and thy duties as a sacrifice without fire. Fetch one coal daily from this altar, and see if thy offering will not burn. Light thy lamp at this flame, and feed it daily with oil from hence, and see if it will not gloriously shine. Keep close to this reviving fire, and see if thy affections will not be warm. In thy want of love to God, lift thy eyes of faith to heaven, behold his beauty, contemplate his excellencies, and see if his amiableness and perfect goodness will not ravish thy heart. As exercise gives appetite, strength, and vigour to the body; so these heavenly exercises will quickly cause the increase of grace and spiritual Besides, it is not false or strange fire which you fetch from heaven for your sacrifice. The zeal which is kindled by your meditations on heaven, is most likely to be a heavenly zeal. Some men's fervency is only drawn from their books, some from the sharpness of affliction, some from the mouth of a moving minister, and some from the attention of an auditory: but he that knows this way to heaven, and derives it daily from the true fountain, shall have his soul revived with the water of life, and enjoy that quickening which is peculiar to the saints. By this faith thou mayest offer Abel's sacrifice, more excellent than that of common men, and by it obtain wit ness that thou art righteous, God testifying of the crifts that they are sincere. When others are reside Really are in Really are sincere. like Baal's priests, to cut themselves, because

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sacrifice will not burn, thou mayest breathe t rit of Elijah, and in the chariot of contemplation aloft, till thy soul and sacrifice gloriously though the flesh and the world should cas them all the water of their opposing enmity not, how can mortals ascend to heaven? Fair wings, and meditation is its chariot. Faith is: ing-glass to thy sacrifice, and meditation set the face of the sun; only take it not away too but hold it there a while, and thy soul will f happy effect. Reader, art thou not thinking thou seest a lively Christian, and hearest his fervent prayer, and edifying discourse, "O ho py a man is this! O that my soul were in this condition!" Why, I here advise thee from G thy soul conscientiously to this work: wash th quently in this Jordan, and thy leprous des will revive, and thou shalt know that there is in Israel, and that thou mayest live a vigoro joyful life, if thou dost not wilfully neglect tl mercies.

SECT. XI. 6. The frequent believing vi glory are the most precious cordials in all affli These cordials, by cheering our spirits, rend sufferings far more easy; enable us to bear with patience and joy, and to strengthen our tions, that we forsake not Christ for fear of t If the way be ever so rough, can it be tedior lead to heaven? O sweet sickness, reproachprisonments, or death, accompanied with these of our future rest! This keeps the suffering the soul, so that it can only touch the flesh. not been for that little (alas, too little!) taste w had for rest, my sufferings would have been gr. and death more terrible. I may say, I had i unless I had believed to see the goodness of the in the land of the living. Unless this promis had been my delight, I should then have per my affliction. One thing have I desired of that will I seek after; that I may dwell in of the Lord all the days of my life, to



beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; and "I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord," Psalm xxvii. 13; cxix. 92; xxvi. 4, 6. All sufferings are nothing to us, so far as we have these supporting joys. When persecution and fear hath shut the doors, Christ can come in, and stand in the midst, and say to his disciples, "Peace be unto you." Paul and Silas can be in heaven, even when they are thrust into the inner prison, their bodies scourged with many stripes, and their feet fast in the stocks. The martyrs find more rest in their flames than their persecutors in their pomp and tyranny, because they foresee the flames they escape, and the rest which their fiery chariot is conveying them to. If the Son of God will walk with us, we are safe in the midst of those flames which shall devour them that cast us in. Abraham went out of his country, not knowing whither he went, because he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: because he had respect unto the recompence of reward. He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; because he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Even Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. This is the noble advantage (of faith, it can look on the means and end together. This is the great reason for our impatience and censuring of God, because we gaze on the evil itself, but fix not our thoughts on what is beyond it. The that saw Christ only on the cross, or in the grave, shake their heads, and think him lost: but God

him dying, buried, rising, glorifying, and all this at one view. Faith will in this imitate God, so far as it hath the glass of a promise to help it. We see God burying us under ground, but we foresee not the spring, when we shall all revive. Could we but clearly see heaven as the end of all God's dealings with us, surely none of his dealings could be grievous. If God would once raise us to this life, we should find, that though heaven and sin are at a great distance; yet heaven and a prison, or banishment, heaven and the belly of a whale, or a den of lions, heaven and consuming sickness, or invading death, are at no such distance. But as Abraham saw Christ's day and rejoiced, so we, in our most forlorn state, might see that day when Christ shall give us rest, and therein rejoice. I beseech thee, Christian, for the honour of the Gospel, and for thy soul's comfort, be not to learn this heavenly art, when in thy greatest extremity thou hast most need to use it. He that with Stephen, sees the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, will comfortably bear the shower of stones. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and that joy must be fetched from the place of our joy: and if we walk without our strength, how long are we like to endure?

SECT. XII. 7. He that hath his conversation in heaven is the profitable Christian to all about him. When a man is in a strange country, how glad is he of the company of one of his own nation. How delightful is it to talk of their own country, their acquaintance, and affairs at home! With what pleasure did Joseph talk with his brethren, and inquire after his father and his brother Benjamin! Is it not so to a Christian, to talk with his brethren that have been above, and inquire after his Father, and Christ his Lord? When a worldly man will talk of nothing but the world, and a politician of state affairs, and a mere scholar of human learning, and a common prosessor of his duties; the heavenly man will be speaking of heaven, and the strange glory his faith hather.

his words pierce and melt the heart, and transform the hearers into other men! How doth his doctrine drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass, while his lips publish the

name of the Lord, and ascribe greatness unto his God! Is not his sweet discourse of heaven like the box of precious ointment, which being poured upon the head of Christ, filled the house with odour? All that are near may be refreshed by it. Happy the people that have a heavenly minister! Happy the children and servants that have a heavenly father or master! Happy the man that hath a heavenly companion, who will watch over thy ways, strengthen thee when thou art weak, cheer thee when thou art drooping, and comfort thee with the comfort wherewith he himself hath been so often comforted of God! This is he that will always be blowing at the spark of thy

eternal life?

spiritual life, and drawing thy soul to God, and will say to thee, as the Samaritan woman, "Come and see one that hath told me all that ever I did;" one that hath loved our souls to the death. Is not this the Christ? Is not the knowledge of God and him

his glory? Come to this man's house, and sit at his table, and he will feast thy soul with the dainties of heaven; travel with him by the way, and he will direct and quicken thee in thy journey to heaven; trade with him in the world, and he will counsel thee to buy the pearl of great price. If thou wrong him, he can pardon thee, remembering that Christ hath pardoned his greater offences. If thou be angry, he is meek, considering the meekness of his heavenly l'attern; or if he fall out with thee, he is soon reconciled, when he recollects that in heaven you must be everlasting friends. This is the Christian of the

Is it not the glory of the saints to see

reports he would make of the other world, and what he had seen, and what the blessed there enjoy! Would they not think this man the best companion, and his discourse the most profitable? Why then do you value the company of saints no more, and inquire no more of them, and reliah their discourse no better? For every saint shall go to heaven in person, and is frequently there in spirit, and hath often viewed it in the glass of the Gospel. For my part, I had rather have the company of a heavenly-minded Christian, than of the most learned disputants, or princely commanders.

SECT. XIII. 8. No man so highly honoureth God as he whose conversation is in heaven. Is not a parent disgraced, when his children feed on husks. are clothed in rags, and keep company with none but rogues and beggars? Is it not so to our heavenly Father, when we who call ourselves his children feed on earth, and the garb of our souls is like that of the naked world, and our hearts familiarly converse with, and cleave to the dust, rather than stand continually in our Father's presence? Surely we live below the children of a King, not according to the height of our hopes, nor the provision of our Father's house. and the great preparations made for his saints. It is well we have a Father of tender bowels, who will own his children in rags. If he did not first challenge his interest in us, neither ourselves nor others could know us to be his people. But when a Christian can live above, and rejoice his soul with the things that are unseen, how is God honoured by such a one! The Lord will testify for him, This man believes me, and takes me at my word; he rejoiceth in my promise before he hath possession; he can be thankful for what his bodily eyes never saw: his rejoicing is not in the flesh, his heart is with me; he loves my presence, and he shall surely enjoy it in my kingdom for ever. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. "Them that honour me I will honour." How did God esteem himself honoured by Caleb and Joshua, when they went in the promised land, and brought back to their brethren a taste of the fruits, and spake well of the good land, and encouraged the people? What a promise and recompence did they receive!

SECT. XIV. 9. A soul that doth not set its affections on things above, disobeys the commands, and loses the most gracious and delightful discoveries of the Word of God. The same God that hath commanded thee to believe, and to be a Christian, hath commanded thee to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, and to set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth: Col. iii. 1, 2. The same God that hath forbidden thee to murder, steal, or commit adultery, hath forbidden thee the neglect of this great duty, and darest thou wilfully disobey him? Why not make conscience of one, as well as the other? He hath made it thy duty, as well as the means of thy comfort, that a double bond may engage thee not to forsake thy own mercies. Besides, what are all the most glorious descriptions of heaven, all those discoveries of our future blessedness, and precious promises of our rest, but lost to thee? Are not these the stars in the firmament of Scripture, and the golden lines in that book of God? Methinks thou shouldst not part with one of these promises, no, not for a world. As heaven is the perfection of all our mercies, so the promises of it in the Gospel are the very soul of the Gospel. Is a comfortable word from the mouth of God of such worth that all the comforts of the world are nothing to it? And dost thou ne-glect and overlook so many of them? Why should God reveal so much of his counsel, and tell us beforehand of the joys we shall possess, but to make us know it for our joy? If it had not been to fill us with the delights of our foreknown blessedness, he might have kept his purpose to himself, and never have let us know it till we come to enjoy it. Yes, when we had got possession of our rest, he migh have still concealed its eternity from us, and the the fears of losing it would have much diminish

the sweetness of our joys. But it hath pleased our Father to open counsel, and let us know the very intent of his heart, that our joys might be full, and that we might live as the heirs of such a kingdom. And shall we now overlook all? Shall we live in earthly cares and sorrow, and rejoice no more in these discoveries, than if the Lord had never written them? If thy prince had but scaled thee a patent of some lordship, how oft wouldst thou cast thine eyes upon it, and make it thy delightful study, till thou shouldst come to possess the dignity itself! And hath God scaled thee a patent of heaven, and dost thou let it lie by thee as if thou hadst forgot it? O that our hearts were as high as our hopes, and our hopes as high as these infallible promises.

SECT. XV. 10. It is but equal that our hearts should be on God, when the heart of God is so much on us. If the Lord of glory can stoop so low as to set his heart on sinful dust, methinks we should easily be persuaded to set our hearts on Christ and glory, and ascend to him in our daily affections, who se much condescends to us. Christian, dost thou not perceive that the heart of God is set upon thee, and that he is still minding thee with tender love, even when thou forgettest both thyself and him? Is he not following thee with daily mercies, moving upon thy soul, providing for thy body, preserving both? Doth he not bear thee continually in the arms of love, and promise that all shall work together for thy good, and suit all his dealings to thy greatest advantage, and give his angels charge over thee? And canst thou be taken up with the joys below, and forget thy Lord who forgets not thee? Unkind ingratitude! When he speaks of his own kindness for us, hear what he says, "Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, she may for-ket, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walks are continually before me." Isaiah xlix. 14, 15. Br when he speaks of our regards to him, the case is otherwise: "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire, yet my people have forgotten me cays without number," Jer. ii. 32. As if he should say, "You will not rise one morning, but you will remember to cover your nakedness, nor forget your vanity or dress; and are these of more worth than your God? of more importance than your eternal life? And yet you can forget this day after day." Give not God cause thus to expostulate with us. Rather let our souls get up to God, and visit him every morning, and our hearts be towards him every moment.

SECT. XVI. 11. Should not our interest in heaven, and our relation to it, continually keep our hearts upon it? There our father keeps his court. We call him, "Our Father who art in heaven." Unworthy children! that can be so taken up in their play, as to be mindless of such a Father. There also is Christ our head, our husband, our life; and shall we not look towards him, and send to him as often as we can, till we come to see him face to face? Since the heavens must receive him, until the times of restitution of all things; let them also receive our hearts with him. "There also is new Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all," Gal. iv. 26. And there are multitudes of our elder brethren. There are our friends and old acquaintance, whose society in the flesh we so much delighted in, and whose departure hence we so much lamented; and is this no attractive to thy thoughts; if they were within thy reach on earth, thou wouldst go and visit them, and why not often visit them in spirit, and rejoice beforehand to think of meeting them there? Socrates rejoiced that he should die, because he believed "he should see Homer, Hesiod, and other eminent persons." "How much more do I rejoice," said a pious old minister, "who am sure to see Christ my Saviour, the eternal Son of God, in his assumed Cartholic the the second movement of the seco flesh: besides so many wise, holy, and renowned A believe patriarchs, prophets, apostles," &c.

should look to heaven, and contemplate the blessed state of the saints, and think with himself, "Though I am not yet so happy as to be with you, yet this is my daily comfort, you are my brethren and fellow-members in Christ, and therefore your joys are my joys, and your glory by this near relation, is my glory; especially while I believe in the same Christ, and hold fast the same faith and obedience, by which you were thus dignified, and rejoice in spirit with you, and congratulate your happiness in my daily meditations."

SECT. XVII. Moreover, our house and home is above. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Why do we then look no oftener towards it, and "groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. If our house were far meaner, sure we should remember it because it is our home. If you were but banished into a strange land, how frequently would your thoughts be at home? And why is it not thus with us in respect to heaven? Is not that more truly and properly our home, where we must take up our everlasting abode, than this, which we are every hour expecting to be separated from, and to see no more? We are strangers, and that is our country. We are heirs with him, and that is our inheritance: even "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us," 1 Pet. i. 4. We are here in continual distress and want, and there lies our substance; even "a better and an enduring substance," Heb. xv. 34. Yea, the very hope of our souls is there; all our hope of relief from our distresses: and all our hope of happiness, when here we are miserable; all this "hope is laid up for us in heaven," Col. i. 5. Why, beloved Christians, have we so much interest and so few thoughts there? so near relation and so little affection? Doth it become us to be delighted in the company of strangers, so as to forget our Father and our

CHAPTER XII.

DIRECTIONS HOW TO LEAD A HEAVENLY LIFE UPON EARTH.

istr. I. (I.) Hinderances to a beavenly life must be avoided; such as, Secr. II. 1. Living in any known sin; Secr. III. 2. An earthly mind; Secr. IV. 3. Ungedly companions; Secr. V. 4. A notional religion; Secr. VI. 5. A haughty spirit; Secr. VII. 6. A slothful spirit; Secr. VIII. 7. Resting in preparatives for a heavenly like, without the thing itself. Secr. IX. (II.) The duties which will promote a heavenly like are these; Secr. X. 1. Be convinced that heaven is the only treasure and happiness; Secr. X. II. 2. Labour to know your interest in it; Secr. XIII. 3. And how near to a process of the secretary of the

SECT. I. As thou valuest the comfort of heavenly conversation, I must here charge thee from God, to vivid some dangerous hinderances: and then faithfully and diligently to practise such duties as will specially assist thee in attaining to a heavenly life. And the hinderances to be avoided with all possible are, are,—living in any known sin,—an earthly nind,—the company of the ungodly—a notional reigion,—a proud and lofty spirit,—a slothful spirit,—ind resting in mere preparations for this heavenly ife, without any acquaintance with the thing itself.

SECT. 11. I. Living in known sin is a grand mpediment to a heavenly conversation. What havoe will this make in thy soul! O the joys that this hath lestroyed! the ruin it hath made among men's craces? The soul strengthening duties it hath him leved! Christian reader, art thou one that hash used.

cares and thoughts, we shall find the least to be bitter and burdensome. Christians, see the emptiness of all these things, and the preciousness of the things above. If thy thoughts should, like the laborious bee, go over the world from flower to flower, from creature to creature, they would bring no honey nor sweetness home, save what they gathered from the relations to eternity. Though every truth of God is precious and ought to be defended; yet even all our study of truth should yet be in reference to our rest: for the observation is too true, "that the lovers of controversies in religion have never been warmed with one spark of the love of God." And as for minding the affairs of church and state; so far as they illustrate the providence of God, and to tend to the settling of the Gospel, and the government of Christ, and consequently to the saving our own souls, and those of our posterity, they are all well worth our diligent observation; but these are only their relations to eternity. Even all our dealings in the world, our buying and selling, our eating and drinking, our building and marrying, our peace and war, so far as they relate not to the life to come, but tend only to the pleasing of the flesh, are not worthy . the frequent thoughts of a Christian. And now doth not thy conscience say that there is nothing but heaven, and the way to it, that is worth thy minding?

SECT. XIX. Now, reader, are these considerations weighty or not? Have I proved it thy duty to keep the heart on things above, or have I not. If thou say, Not, I am confident thou contradictest thy own conscience. If thou acknowledge thyself convinced of the duty, that very tongue of thine shall condemn thee, and that confession be pleaded against thee, if thou wilfully neglectest such a confessed duty. Be thoroughly willing, and the work is more than half done. I have now a few plain directions to give you for your help in this great work; but, alsa, it is in wan to mention them, except you be willing to put them to mention them, except you be willing to put them and it is not the confession.

CHAPTER XII.

DIRECTIONS HOW TO LEAD A HEAVENLY LIFE UPON

SECT. I. (I.) Hinderances to a heavenly life must be avoided; such as, SECT. II. 1. Living in any known sin; SECT. III. 2. An earthly sind it; SECT. IV. 3. Ingodly contained the second single of the contained ligion; SECT. VI. 5. A haughty spirit; SECT. VI. 6. adolothful spirit; SECT. VII. 7. Resting in preparatures for a heavenly life, without the thing itself. SECT. IX. (II.) The duties which will promote a heavenly life, sect. X. 1. Be convinced that heaven is the only treasure and happiness; SECT. XI. XII. 2. Labour to know your interest in it; SECT. XIII. 3. And how ner it is; SECT. XIV. 4. Frequently and seriously talk of it; SECT. XV. 5. Endeavour in every duty to raise your affections nearer to it; SECT. XVI. 6. To the amme purpose improve every object and event; SECT. XVI. 6. To the amme purpose improve every object and event; SECT. XVI. 8. Posses your souls with believing thoughts of the finfinite love of God; SECT. XX. 9. Carefully observe and cherish the motions of the Spirit of God; SECT. XX. X. 10. Nor even neglect the due care of your bodily health.

SECT. I. As thou valuest the comfort of heavenly conversation, I must here charge thee from God, to avoid some dangerous hinderances: and then faithfully and diligently to practise such duties as will especially assist thee in attaining to a heavenly life. And the hinderances to be avoided with all possible care, are,—living in any known sin,—an earthly mind,—the company of the ungodly—a notional religion,—a proud and lofty spirit,—a slothful spirit,—and resting in mere preparations for this heavenly life, without any acquaintance with the thing itself.

Sect. II. 1. Living in known sin is a grand impediment to a heavenly conversation. What have will this make in thy soul! O the joys that this hath destroyed! the ruin it hath made among men's graces? The soul strengthening duties it hath himdered! Christian reader, art thou one that hath used violence with thy conscience? Art thou a wilful neglecter of known duties, either public, private, or secret! Art thou a slave to thine appetite, or to any other commanding sense? Art thou a proud seeker

ate person, ready to take fire at every word or look, or supposed slight? Art thou a deceiver of others in thy dealings, or one that will be rich, right or wrong? If this be thy case, I dare say heaven and thy soul are very great strangers. These beams in thine eyes will not suffer thee to look to heaven; they will be a cloud between thee and thy God. When thou dost but attempt to study eternity, and gather comforts from the life to come, thy sins will presently look thee in the face, and say, "These things belong not to thee." How shouldst thou take comfort from heaven, who takes so much pleasure in the lust of the flesh. How will this damp thy joys, and make the thoughts of that day and state become thy trouble, and not thy delight. Every wilful sin will be to thy comforts, as water to the fire: when thou thinkest to quicken them, this will quench them. It will utterly indispose and disable thee that thou canst no more ascend in Divine meditation, than a bird can fly when its wings are clipped. Sin cuts the very sinews of this heavenly life. O man! what a life dost thou lose! What daily delights dost thou sell for a vile lust! If heaven and hell can meet together, and God become a lover of sin, then mayest thou live in thy sin, and in the states of glory, and have a conversation in heaven, though thou cherish thy corruption. And take heed lest it banish thee from heaven as it does thy heart. And though thou be not guilty, and knowest no reigning sin in thy soul, think what a sad thing it would be, if ever this should prove thy Watch, therefore; especially resolve to keep from the occasion of sin, and out of the way of temptations. What need have we daily to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

SECT. III. 2. An earthly mind is another hinderance carefully to be avoided. God and mammon, earth and heaven, cannot both have the delight of When the heavenly believer is blessing thy heart. himself in his God, and rejoicing in the hope of the Glory to come, perhaps thou art blessing thyself is

thy worldly prosperity, and rejoicing in the hope of thy thriving here: when he is comforting his soul in the views of Christ, of angels, and saints whom he shall live with for ever, then thou art comforting thyself with thy wealth, in looking over thy bills, and bonds, thy goods, thy cattle, or thy buildings, and in thinking of the favour of the great, or the pleasure of a plentiful estate, of larger provisions for thy children after thee, of the advancements of thy family, or the increase of thy dependants. If Christ pronounced him a fool, that said, " Soul, take thy ease, thou hast enough laid up for many years;" how much more so art thou, who knowingly speakest in thy heart the same words! Tell me, what difference is there between this fool's expressions and thy affections? Remember thou hast to do with the Searcher of hearts. Certainly, so much as thou delightest and takest up thy rest on earth, so much of thy delight in God Thine earthly mind may consist with is abated. outward profession and thy common duties; but it cannot consist with this heavenly duty. Thou thyself knowest how seldom and cold, how cursory and reserved thy thoughts have been of the joys above, ever since thou didst trade so eagerly for the world. O the cursed nakedness of many that seem to be religious! They thrust themselves into a multitude of employments, till they are so loaded with labours, and clogged with cares, that their souls are as unfit to converse with God, as a man to walk with a mountain on his back; and as unapt to soar in meditation, as their bodies to leap above the sun. And when they have lost that heaven upon earth, which they might have had, they take up with a few rotten arguments, to prove it lawful; though indeed they cannot. I advise thee, Christian, who hast tasted the pleasures of a heavenly life, as ever thou wouldst taste of them any more, avoid this devouring gulf of an earthly mind. If once thou come to this, that "thou wilt be rich, thou fallest into temptation, and a . 5.L. !w. snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, ""?" wi. 9. Keep these things loose about thee like the upper garments, that thou mayest lay them by ever there is need; but let God and glory be meart. Ever remember, "that the friendship world is enmity with God. Whosever, the will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of James iv. 4. "Love not the world, neither the that are in the world. If any man love the the love of the father is not in him," I John This is plain dealing: and happy he that fai receives it!

SECT. IV. 3. Beware of the company of t godly. Not that I would dissuade thee from sary converse, or from doing them any office o especially not from endeavouring the good o souls, as long as thou hast any opportunity or nor would I have thee to conclude them to I and swine, in order to evade the duty of re nor even to judge them such at all, as long a is any hope for the better: much less can I a of their practice, who conclude men dogs or before ever they faithfully and lovingly adı them, or perhaps before they have known the spoken with them. But it is the unnecessary of ungodly men, and too much familiarity w profitable companions, that I dissuade thee Not only the open profane, the swearer, the dru and the enemies of godliness, will prove hurtfu panions to us, though these indeed are chiefly avoided: but too frequent society with persons civil and moral, whose conversation is emp unedifying, may much divert our thoughts fro Our backwardness is such that we ne most constant and powerful helps. A stone or is as fit to rise and fly in the air, as our hea naturally to move towards heaven. You ne hinder the rocks from flying up to the sky; it ficient that you do not help them: and surely spirits have not great assistance, they may e kept from soaring upward, though they shor meet with the least impediment. O think the choice of your company! When your

isposed for heaven, that you need no help to lift n up, but, as flames, you are always mounting carrying with you all that is in your way, then ed you may be less careful of your company; till then, as you love the delights of a heavenly be careful herein. What will it advantage thee divine life, to hear how the market goes, or what weather is, or is like to be, or what news is stir-? This is the discourse of earthly men. What it conduce to the raising the heart Godward, to r that this is an able minister, or that an eminent istian, or this is an excellent sermon, or that an ellent book, or to hear some difficult, but unimtant controversy. Yet this, for the most part, is sweetest discourse thou art like to have from a nal, speculative, dead-hearted professor. Nay, if a hast newly been warming thy heart in the conplation of the blessed joys above, would not this ourse benumb thy affections, and quickly freeze heart again? I appeal to the judgment of any 1 that hath tried it, and maketh observations on frame of his spirit. Men cannot well talk of one ig, and mind another, especially things of such erent natures. You, young men, who are most le to this temptation, think seriously of what I ; can you have your hearts in heaven among r roaring companions in an alchouse or tavern? vhen you work in your shops with those whose imon language is oaths, filthiness, or foolish talkor jesting? Nay, let me tell you, if you choose h company when you might have better, and find st delight in such, you are so far from heavenly versation, that as yet you have no title to heaven II, and in that state shall never come there. If r treasure was there, your heart could not be on igs so distant. In a word, our company will be art of our happiness in heaven, and it is a singular of our furtherance to it, or hinderance from it. CT. V. 4. Avoid frequent disputes about lesser , and a religion that lies only in opinions. ere usually least acquainted with a heavenly

life, who are violent disputers about the stantials of religion. He whose religion is his opinions, will be most frequently and ze speaking his opinions; and he whose religion the knowledge and love of God and Christ, most delightfully speaking of that happy tim he shall enjoy them. He is a rare and I Christian, who is skilful to improve welltruths. Therefore let me advise you to aspire heavenly life, not to spend too much of your th your time, your zeal, or your speech upon d that less concern your souls; but when hyp are feeding on husks and shells, do you feed joys above. I wish you were able to defend truth of God, and to this end would read and but still I would have the chief truth to be studied, and none to cast out your thoughts nity. The least controverted points are usual weighty, and of most necessary, frequent use souls. Therefore study well such Scripture p as these: "Him that is weak in the faith ye, but not to doubtful disputations," Rom. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, k that they do gender strifes. And the servant Lord must not strive," 2 Tim. ii. 23, 24. foolish questions, and genealogies, and conte and strivings about the law, for they are unpr and vain," Tit. iii. 9. "If any man teach oth and consent not to wholesome words, even the of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine is according to godliness, he is proud, know thing, but doting about questions and strifes of whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surn perverse disputings of men of corrupt mine destitute of the truth, supposing that gain i ness; from such withdraw thyself," 2 Tim. v SECT. VI. 5. Take heed of a proud ar spirit. There is such an antipathy between and God, that thou wilt never get thy b him, nor get him near thy heart, as long

vaileth in it. If it cast the angels out of

eds keep thy heart from heaven. If it cast : parents out of paradise, and separated be-1e Lord and us, and brought his curse on all tures here below; it will certainly keep our rom paradise, and increase the cursed separom our God. Intercourse with God will n low, and that lowliness will promote their When a man is used to be much with d taken up in the study of his glorious attrie abhors himself in dust and ashes; and that prence is his best preparative to obtain adto God again. Therefore, after a soulg day, or in times of trouble, when the soul , it useth to have freest access to God, and nost of the life above. "The delight of God m that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and h at his word," Isa. lxvi. 2; and the delight a soul is in God: and where there is mutual there will be freest admittance, heartiest , and most frequent converse. But God is om dwelling in the soul that is proud, that he admit it to any near access. "The proud eth afar off," Psalm exxxviii. 6. "God rehe proud, and giveth grace to the humble, . 5. A proud mind is high in conceit, selfand carnal aspiring; a humble mind is high 1 God's esteem, and in holy aspiring. These s of high-mindedness are most of all opposite ther, as we see most wars are between princes ces, and not between a prince and a plough-Vell, then, art thou a man of worth in thine s? Art thou delighted when thou hearest steem with men, and much dejected when rest that they slight thee? Dost thou love st that honour thee, and think meanly of t do not, though they be otherwise men of and honesty? Must thou have thy humours and thy judgment be a rule, and thy word ? about thee? Are thy passions kindled, r will be crossed? Art thou ready to judge be sordid baseness, and knowest not how

to submit to humble confession, when thou hast sinned against God, or injured thy brother? Art thou one that lookest strange at the godly poor, and art almost ashamed to be their companion? Canst thou not serve God in a low place as well as in a high? Are thy boastings restrained more by prudence or artifice than humility? Dost thou desire to have all men's eyes upon thee, and to hear them say, " This is he?" Art thou unacquainted with the deceitfulness and wickedness of thy heart? Art thou more ready to defend thy innocence than to accuse thyself, or confess thy fault? Canst thou hardly bear a close reproof, or digest plain dealing? If these symptoms be undeniably in thy heart, thou art a proud person. There is too much of hell abiding in thee to have any acquaintance of heaven; thy soul is too like the devil to have any familiarity with God. A proud man makes himself his god, and sets up himself as his idol: how then can his affections be set on God? How can he possibly have his heart in heaven? Invention and memory may possibly furnish his tongue with humble and heavenly expressions, but in his spirit there is no more heaven than there is humility. I speak the more of it, because it is the most common and dangerous sin in morality, and most promotes the great sin of infidelity. O Christian if thou wouldst live continually in the presence of thy Lord, lie in the dust, and he will thence take thee up. " Learn of him to be meek and lowly, and thou shalt find rest unto thy soul," Matt. xi. 29. Otherwise thy soul will "be like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt," Isa. lvii. 20; and instead of these sweet delights in God, thy pride will fill thee with perpetual disquiet. As he that "humbleth himself as a little child shall hereafter be greatest in the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xviii. 4; so shall he now be greatest in the foretastes of it. "God dwells with a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones," Isa. lvii. 15. Therefore "humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up," James iv. 10. And when others are cast down, "then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person," Job xxii. 29.

SECT. VII. 6. A slothful spirit is another impediment to this heavenly life. And I verily think there is nothing hinders it more than this in men of a good understanding. If it were only the exercise of the body, the moving of the lips, the bending of the knee, men would as commonly step to heaven as they go to visit a friend. But to separate our thoughts and affections from the world, to draw forth all our graces, and increase each in its proper object. and hold them to it till the work prospers in our hands, this, this is the difficulty. Reader, heaven is above thee, and dost thou think to travel this steep ascent without labour and resolution? Canst thou get that earthly heart to heaven, and bring that backward mind to God, whilst thou liest still and takest thine ease? If lying down at the foot of the hill, and looking towards the top, and wishing we were there would serve the turn, then we should have daily travellers for heaven. "But the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," Matt. xi. 12. There must be violence used to get these first fruits, as well as to get the full possession. Dost thou not feel it so, though I should not tell thee? Will thy heart get upwards except thou drive it? Thou knowest that heaven is all thy hope, that nothing below can yield thee rest; that a heart, seldom thinking of heaven, can fetch but little comfort thence; and yet dost thou not lose thy opportunities, and lie below, when thou shouldst walk above, and live with God? Dost thou not commend the sweetness of a heavenly life, and judge those the best Christians that use it, and yet never try it thyself? As the sluggard that stretches himself on his bed, and cries, O that this were working so dost thou talk and trifle, and live at case, and so () that I could get my heart to heaven! How my read books and hear sermons, expecting to he

some easier way, or to meet with a shorter course t comfort, than they are ever like to find in Scripture Or they ask for directions for a heavenly life, and the hearing them will serve, they will be heaven! Christians; but if we show them their work, and te them they cannot have these delights on easier terms then they leave us, as the young man left Chris sorrowful. If thou art convinced, reader, that thi work is necessary to thy comfort, set upon it resclutely: if thy heart draw back, force it on with th command of reason; if thy reason begin to dispute produce the command of God, and urge thy ow necessity, with the other considerations suggested i the former chapter. Let not such an incomparable treasure lie before thee, with thy hand in thy boson nor thy life be a continual vexation, when it migh be a continual feast, only because thou wilt not exer thyself. Sit not still with a disconsolate spirit, whil comforts grow before thine eyes, like a man in th midst of a garden of flowers, that will not rise to ge them, and partake of their sweetness. This I know Christ is the fountain; but the well is deep, and tho must get forth this water, before thou canst be re freshed with it. I know so far as you are spiritual you need not all this striving and violence; but i part you are carnal, and as long as it is so, there i need of labour. It was a custom of the Parthians not to give their children any meat in the morning before they saw the sweat on their faces with som labour. And you shall find this to be God's usus course, not to give his children the tastes of his de lights till they begin to sweat in seeking after him Judge, therefore, whether a heavenly life, or the carnal ease, be better; and, as a wise man, make the choice accordingly. Yea, let me add for thy encou ragement, thou needst not to employ thy thought more than what thou now dost; it is only to fix then upon better and more pleasant objects. Employ be as many serious thoughts every day upon the ex lent glory of the life to come, as thou now dost worldly affairs, yea, on vanities and imperting and thy heart will soon be at heaven. On the whole, it is "the field of the slothful that is all grown over with thorns and nettles; and the desire of the slothful killeth his joy, for his hands refuse to labour: and it is the slothful man that saith, There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets. As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful upon his The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom: it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth," Prov. xxiv. 30, 31; xxi. 25; xxix. 13-15; though it be to feed himself with the food of life. What is this but throwing away our consolations, and consequently the precious blood that bought them? For "he that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster," Prov. xviii. 9. Apply this to thy spiritual work, and study well the meaning of it.

SECT. VIII. 7. Contentment with the mere preparatives to this heavenly life, while we are utter strangers to the life itself, is also a dangerous and secret hinderance. When we take up with the mere study of heavenly things, and the notions of them, or the talking with one another about them; as if this were enough to make us heavenly. None are in more danger of this snare than those that are employed in leading the devotions of others, especially preachers of the Gospel. O how easily may such be deceived! While they do nothing so much as read and study of heaven; preach, and pray, and talk of heaven; is not this the heavenly life? Alas, all this is but mere preparation: this is but collecting the materials, not erecting the building itself. It is but gathering the manna for others, and not eating and digesting it ourselves. As he that sits at home may draw exact maps of countries, and yet never see them, nor travel toward them; so you may describe to others the joys of heaven, and yet never come near it in your own hearts. A blind man, by learning, may dispute of light and colours; so may you set forth to others that heavenly light, which not callightened your own souls, and bring that fire? the hearts of your people, which never warmed

own hearts. What heavenly passages had Balaam in his prophecies, yet how little of it in his spirit! Nay, we are under a more subtle temptation than any other men, to draw us from this heavenly life. Studying and preaching of heaven more resembles a heavenly life, than thinking and talking of the world does; and yet the resemblance is apt to decive us. This is to die the most miserable death, even to famish ourselves, because we have bread on our tables; and to die of thirst while we draw water for others, thinking it enough that we have daily to do with it, though we never drink for the re-

freshment of our own souls. SECT. IX. (II.) Having thus showed thee what hinderances will resist thee in thy work, I expect that thou resolve against them, consider them seriously, and avoid them faithfully, or else thy labour will be in vain. I must also tell thee, that I here expect thy promise, as thou valuest the delights of those foretastes of heaven, to make conscience of performing the following duties; the reading of which, without their constant practice, will not bring heaven into thy heart. Particularly, be convinced that heaven is thy only treasure and happiness; labour to know that it is thy own, and how near it is; frequently and seriously talk of it; endeavour to raise thy affections nearer to it in every duty; to the same purpose improve every object and event; be much in the angelical work of praise; possess thy soul with believing thoughts of the infinite love of God; carefully observe and cherish the motions of the Spirit of God; nor even neglect the due care of thy bodily health.

reasure and happiness; and labour to know what a reasure and happiness it is. If thou do not believe to be the chief good, thou wilt never set thy heart upon it; and this conviction must sink into thy affections; for if it be only a notion, it will have little efficacy. If Eve once supposes she sees more worth in the forbidden fruit than in the love and enjoy in the forbidden fruit than in

ment of God, no wonder if it have more of her heart than God. If your judgment once prefer the delights of the flesh before the delights of the presence of God, it is impossible your heart should be in heaven. As it is ignorance of the emptiness of the things be low that makes men overvalue them; so it is ignorance of the high delights above, which is the cause that men so little mind them. If you see a purse of gold, and believe it to be counters, it will not entice your affections to it. It is not the real excellence of a thing itself, but its known excellence, that excites desire. If an ignorant man see a book containing the secrets of arts and sciences, he values it no more than common price, because he knows not what is in it; but he that knows it highly values it, and can even forbear his meat, drink, and sleep, to read it. As the Jews killed the Messiah, while they waited for him, because they did not know him; so the world cries out for rest, and busily seeks for delight and happiness, because they know it not; for did they thoroughly know what it is they could not so slight the everlasting treasure.

SECT. XI. 2. Labour also to know that heaven is thy own happiness. We may confess heaven to be the best condition, though we despair of enjoying it; and we may desire and seek it, if we see the attainment but probable: but we can never delightfully rejoice in it, till we are in some measure persuaded of our title to it. What comfort is it to a man that is naked to see the rich attire of others! What delight is it for a man that hath not a house to put his head in, to see the sumptuous buildings of others! Would not all this rather increase his anguish, and make him more sensible of his own misery? so for a man to know the excellencies of heaven, and not know whether ever he shall enjoy them, may raise desire and urge pursuit, but he will have little joy. Who will set his heart on another man's possession If your houses, your goods, your cattle, your children, were not your own, you would less mind them, and less delight in them. O Christian! Test h therefore, till you can call this rest your own: bring thy heart to the bar of trial: set the qualifications of saints on one side, and of thy soul on the other, and then judge how near they resemble. Thou hast the same word to judge thyself by now, as thou must be judged by at the great day. Mistake not the Scripture's description of a saint, that thou neither acquit nor condemn thyself upon mistakes. For as groundless hopes tend to confusion, and are the greatest cause of most men's damnation; so groundless doubts tend to and are the greatest cause of the saints' perplexity and distress. Therefore lay thy foundation for trial safely, and proceed in the work deliberately and resolutely, nor give over till thou canst say, either thou hast, or hast not yet a title to this rest. O! if men did truly know that God is their own Father, and Christ their own Redeemer and Head,

other thou hast, or hast not yet a title to this rest. Ol if men did truly know that God is their own Father, and Christ their own Redeemer and Head, and that those are their own everlasting habitations, and that there they must abide and be happy for ever; how could they choose but be transported with the forethoughts thereof! If a Christian could but look upon sun, moon, and stars, and reckon all his own in Christ, and say, "These are the bleasings that my Lord hath procured me, and things incomparably greater than these;" what holy raptures would his spirit feel!

SECT. XII. The more do they sin against their own comforts, as well as against the grace of the Gospel, who plead for their unbelief, and cherish distrustful thoughts of God, and injurious thoughts of their Redeemer; who represent the covenant, as if it were of works, and not of grace; and Christ as an enemy, rather than a Saviour; as if he were willing they should die in their unbelief, when he hath invited them so often and so affectionately, and suffered the agonies that they should suffer. Wretches that we are to be keeping up jealousies of our Lord, when we should be rejoicing in his love. As it any man could choose Christ, before Christ hath chosen him or any man were more willing to be happy, the

Christ is to make him happy. Away with these i

rious, if not blasphemous, thoughts! If ever thou ast harboured such thoughts in thy breast, cast em from thee, and take heed how thou ever enterinest them more. God hath written the names of is people in heaven, as you use to write your names: marks on your goods; and shall we be attempting raze them out, and to write our names on the bors of hell? But blessed be God, "whose fountion standeth sure," 2 Tim. ii. 19; "and who keeph us by his power through faith unto salvation," Pet. i. 5.

SECT. XIII. 3. Labour to apprehend how near ly rest is. What we think near at hand, we are fore sensible of than that which we behold at a disince. When judgments or mercies are afar off, we ilk of them with little concern, but when they draw ose to us, we tremble at or rejoice in them. This akes men think on heaven so insensibly, because ney conceit it at too great a distance; they look on as twenty, thirty, or forty years off. How much etter were it to receive "the sentence of death in urselves," 2 Cor. i. 9, and to look on eternity as near; hand! While I am writing and thinking of it, it asteneth near, and I am even entering into it bere I am aware. While thou art reading this, whover thou art, time posteth on, and thy life will be one as a tale that is told. If you verily believed ou should die to-morrow, how seriously would you ink of heaven to-night! When Samuel had told aul, "To-morrow shalt thou be with me," this ruck him to the heart. And if Christ should say to believing soul, "To-morrow shalt thou be with e," this would bring him in spirit to heaven bere-hand. Do but suppose that you are still enterg into heaven, and it will greatly help you more riously to mind it.

SECT. XIV. 4. Let thy eternal rest be the arbivet thy frequent serious discourse; especially with see that can speak from their hearts, and are suggested themselves with a heavenly nature. It is not pity Christians should ever meet together

without some talk of their meeting in heaven, o the way to it, before they part. It is pity so m time is spent in vain conversation, and useless putes, and not a serious word of heaven among th Methinks we should meet together on purpose warm our spirits with discoursing of our rest. hear a Christian set forth that blessed glorious st with life and power, from the promises of the Go methinks should make us say, " Did not our he burn within us, while he opened to us the Se tures?" Luke xxiv. 32. If a Felix will trem when he hears his judgment powerfully represen why should not the believer be revived, when hears his eternal rest described? Wicked men be delighted in talking together of their wickedn and should not Christians then be delighted in t ing of Christ; and the heirs of heaven in talkin their inheritance? This may make our hearts vive, as it did Jacob's to hear the message that ca him to Goshen, and to see the chariots that she bring him to Joseph. O that we were furnis with skill and resolution, to turn the stream of m common discourse to these more sublime and prec things! and, when men begin to talk of things profitable, that we could tell how to put in a v for heaven, and say, as Peter of his bodily food, " so, for I have never eaten any thing that is com

then, as the Psalmist, when you are in company, "my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I fer not Jerusalem above my chief joy, exxxvii. 6. Then you shall find it true, that wholesome tongue is a tree of life," Prov. xv. 4. SECT. XV. 5. Endeavour in every duty to thy affections nearer to heaven. God's end Institution of his ordinances, was, that they be as so many steps to advance us to our rest

or unclean!" O the good that we might both do receive by this course! Had it not been to dete from unprofitable conversation, Christ would have talked of our "giving an account of e idle word, in the day of judment," Matt. xii. 36.

HEAVENLY LIFE UPON EARTH. in subordination to Christ, we might daily in our affections. Let this be thy end in them, and doubtless they will not be unsuc-How have you been rejoiced by a few lines friend, when you could not see him face to And may we not have intercourse with God ordinances, though our persons be yet so far ? May not our spirits rejoice in reading ines which contain our legacy and charter for 1? With what gladness and triumph may we 1e expressions of Divine love, and hear of our al country, though we have not yet the hapto behold it! Men that are separated by sea nd, can by letters carry on great and gainful ; and may not a Christian, in the wise imnent of duties, drive on this happy trade for Come, then, renounce formality, custom, and se, and kneel down in secret or public prayer, ope to get thy heart nearer to God before thou up. When thou openest thy Bible, or other nope to meet with some passage of Divine truth, ch blessing of the Spirit with it, as will give fuller taste of heaven. When thou art going house of God, say, " I hope to meet with somerom God, to raise my affections, before I re-I hope the Spirit will give me the meeting, and n my heart with those celestial delights; I Thrist will appear to me in that way, and shine me with light from heaven; let me hear his cting and reviving voice, and cause the scales from my eyes, that I may see more of that than I ever yet saw. I hope, before I return, ord will bring my heart within the view of rest, t it before his Father's presence, that I may reas the shepherds from the heavenly vision, ing and praising God for all the things I have and seen." When the Indians first saw that glish could converse together by letters, the there was some spirit enclosed in them. by standers admire, when Christians ion with God in duties, what there

those Scriptures, in that sermon, in this prayer, that fills their hearts so full of joy, and so transports them above themselves. Certainly God would not fail us in our duties, if we did not fail ourselves. Remember, therefore, always to pray for your minister, that God would put some divine message into his mouth, which may leave a heavenly relish upon your spirit.

SECT. XVI. 6. Improve every chiect, and every

SECT. XVI. 6. Improve every object, and every event, to mind thy soul of its approaching rest. As all providences and creatures are means to our rest, so they point us to that as their end. God's sweetest dealings with us at the present would not be half so sweet as they are, if they did not intimate some fur-Thou takest but the bare earnest, ther sweetness. and overlookest the main sum, when thou receivest thy mercies, and forgettest thy crown. O that Christians were skilful in this art! You can open your Bibles; learn to open the volumes of creation and providence, to read there also of God and glory. Thus we might have a fuller taste of Christ and heaven in every common meal, than most men have in a sacrament. If thou prosper in the world, let it make thee more sensible of thy perpetual prosperity. If thou art weary with labour, let it make the thoughts of thy eternal rest more sweet. If things go cross. let thy desires be more earnest to have sorrows and sufferings for ever cease. Is thy body refreshed with food or sleep? remember the inconceivable refreshment with Christ. Dost thou hear any good news? remember what glad tidings it will be to hear the trump of God, and the applauding sentence of Christ. Art thou delighted with the society of the saints? remember what the perfect society in heaven will be. Is God communicating himself to thy spirit? remember the time of thy highest ad-

thy spirit? remember the time of thy highest advancement, when both thy communion and joy shall be full. Dost thou hear the raging noise of the wicked, and the confusions of the world? think of the blessed harmony in heaven. Dost thou hear the tempest of war? remember the day when thou shall tempest of war?

be in perfect peace, under the wings of the Prince of Peace for ever. Thus every condition and creature afford us advantages of a heavenly life, if we had

but hearts to improve them.

SECT. XVII. 7. Be much in the evangelical work of praise. The more heavenly the employment, the more it will make the spirit heavenly. Praising God is the work of angels and saints in heaven, and will be our own everlasting work; and if we were more in it now, we should be like to what we shall be then. As desire, faith, and hope, are of shorter continuance than love and joy; so also preaching, prayer, and sacraments, and all means for expressing and confirming our faith and hope, shall cease, when our triumphant expressions of love and joy shall abide for ever. The liveliest emblem of heaven that I know upon earth, is, when the people of God, in the cleep sense of his excellency and bounty, from hearts abounding with love and joy, join together both in heart and voice, in the cheerful and melodious singing of his praises. These delights, like the testimony of the Spirit, witness themselves to be of God, and bring the evidence of their heavenly parentage along with them.

that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name," Heb. xiii. 15. Had not David a most heavenly spirit, who was so much in this heavenly work? Doth it not sometimes raise our heart, when we only read the song of Moses, and the psalms of David? How much more would it raise and refresh us, to be skilful and frequent in the work ourselves! O the madness of youth, that lay out their vigour of body and mind upon vain delights and fleshly lusts, which is so unfit for the noblest work of man! And, O the sinful folly of many of the saints who drench their spirits in continual sadness, and waste their days in complaints and groans, and so make themselves both in body and mind unfit for this sweet and heavenly work! Instead of joining with the people of God in his praises, they are questioning their worthiness, and studying their miseries, and so rob God of his glory, and themselves of their consolation. But the greatest destroyer of our comfort in this duty, is our taking up with the tune and melody, and suffering the heart to be idle, which ought to perform the principal part of the work, and use the melody to revive and exhilarate itself.

believing thoughts of the infinite love of God. Love is the attractive of love. Few so vile, but will lov those that love them. No doubt it is the death our heavenly life, to have hard thoughts of God, conceive of him as one that would rather damn the save us. This is to put the blessed God into t similitude of Satan. When our ignorance and 1 belief have drawn the most deformed picture of C in our imaginations, then we complain that we c not love him nor delight in him. This is the of many thousand Christians. Alas, that we she thus blaspheme God, and blast our own joys! S ture assures us that "God is love," I John iv "that fury is not in him," Isa. xxvii. 4; "? hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, the wicked turn from his way and live 11. Much more hath he testified his love

SECT. XIX. 8. Ever keep thy soul possessed with

sen, and his full resolution effectually to save them. () that we could always think of God, as we do of a friend! as of one that unfeignedly loves us, even more than we do ourselves; whose very heart is set upon us to do us good, and hath therefore provided for us an everlasting dwelling with himself! it would not then be so hard to have our hearts ever with him! Where we love most heartily, we shall think most sweetly, and most freely. I fear most Christians think higher of the love of a hearty friend than of the love of God; and what wonder, then, if they love their friends better than God, and had rather live with them than with God.

SECT. XX. 9. Carefully observe and cherish the motions of the Spirit of God. If ever thy soul get above this earth, and get acquainted with this heavenly life, the Spirit of God must be to thee, as the chariot to Elijah; yea, the very living principle by which thou must move and ascend. Othen grieve not thy guide, quench not thy life, knock not off thy chariot wheels! You little think how much the life of all your graces, and the happiness of your souls, depend upon your ready and cordial obedience When the Spirit urges thee to secret to the Spirit. prayer, or forbids thee thy known transgressions, or points out to thee the way in which thou shouldst go, and thou wilt not regard; no wonder if heaven and thy soul be strange. If thou wilt not follow the Spirit, while it would draw thee to Christ and thy duty; how should it lead thee to heaven, and bring thy heart into the presence of God? What supernatural help, what bold access, shall the soul find in its approaches to the Almighty, that constantly obeys the Spirit! And how backward, how dull, how shamed, will he be in these addresses, who hath often broken away from the Spirit that would have guided him! Christian reader, dost thou not feel sometimes a strong impression to retire from the world, and draw near to God? Do not disobey, but take the offer, and hoist up thy sails while this liles d gale may be had. The more of the Spirit w resist, the deeper will it wound; and the mor obey, the speedier will be our pace.

SECT. XXI. 10. I advise thee, as a farther to this heavenly life, not to neglect the due ca thy bodily health. The body is a useful servar thou give it its due, and no more than its due: it is a most devouring tyrant, if thou suffer it to what it unreasonably desires; and it is as a blu knife, if thou unjustly deny it what is necessary support. When we consider how frequently offend on both extremes, and how few use bodies aright, we cannot wonder if they be much dered in their converse with heaven. Most men slaves to their appetite, and can scarcely deny thing to the flesh, and are therefore willingly ca by it to their sports, or profits, or vain compan when they should raise their minds to God and ven. As you love your souls, "make not prov for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof," Rom, xiii but remember, "to be carnally minded is death: cause the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot pl God. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, no the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spir mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live," I viii. 6-8, 12, 13. There are a few, who much hi their heavenly joy, by denying the body its nece ries, and so making it unable to serve them: if wronged their flesh only, it would be no great ter; but they wrong their souls also; as he that s the house injures the inhabitants. When the l is sick, and the spirits languish, how heavily de move in the thoughts and joys of heaven!





HEAVENLY LIFE UPON EARTH.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NATURE OF HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION; WITH THE TIME, PLACE, AND TEMPER FITTEST FOR IT.

Burr. I. The duty of beavenly contemplation is recommended to the reader, Sucr. II. And defined. Sucr. III.—VI. (I.) The definition is illustrated. Sucr. VII. (II.) The time fittest for it is represented, as, Sucr. VIII. 1. Stated; Sucr. IX.—XIII. 2. Frequent; Sucr. XIII. and 3. Seasonable every day, particularly every Lord's day; Sucr. XIV.—XVII. But more especially when our hearts are warmed with a sense of Divine things; or when we are afficted, or temples; or when we are near death. Sucr. XVII. (III.) The fittest place for it, is the most reduced; Sucr. XIV. (IV.) And the temper fittest for it is, Sucr. XXII. 2. When our minets are most clear of the world, Sucr. XXII. 2. And most solemn and serious.

SECT. I. Once more I entreat thee, reader, as thou makest conscience of a revealed duty, and darest not wilfully resist the Spirit; as thou valuest the high delights of a saint, and the soul-ravishing exercise of heavenly contemplation; that thou diligently tudy, and speedily and faithfully practise the followng directions. If, by this means, thou dost not nd an increase of all thy graces, and dost not grow yond the stature of common Christians, and are t made more serviceable in thy place, and more cious in the eyes of all discerning persons, if thy I enjoy not more communion with God, and thy be not fuller of comfort, and hast it not readier hee at a dying hour; then cast away these direc-3, and exclaim against me for ever as a deceiver. CT. II. The duty which I press upon thee so stly, and in the practice of which I am now to thee, is, "The set and solemn acting of all the of thy soul in meditation upon thy everlasting More fully to explain the nature of this duty, here illustrate a little the description itself. int out the fittest time, place, and temper of it.

II. 1. It is not improper to illustrate a little of r in which we have described this duty of or the considering and contemplating of

spiritual things. It is confessed to be a duty b but practically denied by most. Many that mak science of other duties, easily forget this. troubled if they omit a sermon, a fast, or a prapublic or private, yet were never troubled that have omitted meditation, perhaps all their lifeti this very day; though it be that duty, by whi other duties are improved, and by which the digesteth truths for its nourishment and comfor was God's command to Joshua, "This book of the meditate therein day and night, that thou n obseve to do according to all that is written the Joshua i. 8. As digestion turns food into chy blood, for vigorous health; so meditation turn truths received and remembered into warm affe firm resolution, and holy conversation.

SECT. IV. This meditation is the acting of powers of the soul. It is the work of the livin not of the dead. It is a work of all others the spiritual and sublime, and therefore not to b performed by a heart that is merely carnal and ly. They must necessarily have some relati heaven, before they can familiarly converse I suppose them to be such as have a title to when I persuade them to rejoice in the medit And supposing thee to be a Christian now exhorting thee to be an active Christian. it is the work of the soul I am setting thee t bodily exercise doth here profit but little. must have all the powers of the soul to disting from the common meditation of students: for the derstanding is not the whole soul, and therefor not do the whole work. As in the body, the st must turn the food into chyle, and prepare f liver, the liver and spleen turn it into bloom prepare for the heart and brain; so in the so understanding must take in truths and prep for the will, and that for the affections. heaven have various excellencies, and ther hath formed the soul with different pow

CONTEMPLATION CONSIDERED

prehending those excellencies. had we been for odoriferous flowers, i smell? or what good would language or done us, or what pleasure should we he meats and drinks, without the sense of what good could all the glory of heave us, or what pleasure should we have ha fection of God himself, if we had been affections of love and joy? And what sweetness canst thou possibly receive b tations on eternity, whilst thou dost not affections of the soul, by which thou mu of this sweetness and strength? It is th Christians, to think that meditation is c of the understanding and memory; when boy can do this, or persons that hate the they think on. So that you see there is done, than barely to remember and thir as some labours not only stir a hand or : ercise the whole body, so doth meditation soul. As the affections of sinners ar world, are turned to idols, and fallen well as their understanding; so must th be reduced to God, as well as the unders as their whole soul was filled with sin whole must be filled with God now. So scription of the blessed man: "His de law of the Lord, and in his law doth he and night," Psalm i. 2. Sect. V. This meditation is set and

SECT. V. This meditation is set and there is solemn prayer, when we set our to that duty; and ejaculatory prayer, midst of other business we send up so quest to God; so also there is solemn when we apply ourselves wholly to the transient meditation, when in the minds. And as solemn prayer is econstant course of duty, or occasion ordinary season; so also is meditatio. I would persuade you to that r

is mixed with your common labours, and also that which special occasions direct you to; yet I would have you likewise make it a constant standing duty, as you do by hearing, praying, and reading the Scriptures; and no more intermix other matters with it than you would with prayer, or other stated solemnities.

SECT. VI. This meditation is upon thy everlast-

ing rest. I would not have you cast off your other meditations; but surely, as heaven bath the pre-eminence in perfection, it should have it also in our meditation. That which will make us most happy when we possess it, will make us most joyful when we meditate upon it. Other meditations are as numerous as there are lines in the Scripture, or creatures in the universe, or particular providences in the government of the world. But this is a walk to mount Sion: from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of saints; from earth to heaven; from time to eternity: it is walking upon sun, moon, and stars in the garden and paradise of God. It may seem far off; but spirits are quick; whether in the body or out of the body, their motion is swift You need not fear, like the men of the world, lest these thoughts should make you mad. It is heaven, and not hell, that I persuade you to walk in. It is joy, and not sorrow, that I persuade you to exercise. I urge you to look on no deformed objects, but only upon the ravishing glory of saints, and the unspeakable excellencies of the God of glory, and the beams that stream from the face of his Son. distract a man to think of his own happiness? Will it distract the miserable to think of mercy, or the prisoner to foresee deliverance, or the poor to think of approaching riches and honour? Methinks it should rather make a man mad, to think of living in world of woe, and abiding in poverty and sickness, ong the rage of wicked men, than to think of living The Christ in bliss. "But wisdom is justified of all children," Luke vii. 35. Knowledge hath no my but the ignorant. This heavenly course was r spoken against by any, but those that never wit, or never used it. I fear more the negle of men that approve it, than the opposition or argu-

ments of any against it. SECT. VII. (II.) As to the fittest time for this heavenly contemplation, let me only advise, that it

be stated, frequent, and seasonable.

SECT. VIII. 1. Give it a stated time. If thou suit thy time to the advantage of the work, without placing any religion in the time itself, thou hast no need to fear superstition. Stated time is a hedge to duty, and defends it against many temptations to omission. Some have not their time at command, and therefore cannot set their hours; and many are so poor, that the necessities of their families deny them this freedom. Such persons should be watchful to redeem time as much as they can, and take their vacant opportunities as they fall, and especially join meditation and prayer as much as they can, with the labours of their callings. Yet those that have more time to spare from their worldly necessities, and are masters of their time, I still advise to keep this duty to a stated time. And indeed, if every work of the day had its appointed time, we should be better skilled, both in redeeming time and in performing duty.

SECT. IX. 2. Let it be frequent as well as stated. How oft it should be, I cannot determine, because men's circumstances differ. But, in general, Scripture requires it to be frequent, when it mentions meditating day and night. For those, therefore, who can conveniently omit other business, I advise that it be once a day at least. Frequency in heavenly

contemplation is particularly important.

SECT. X. To prevent a shyness between God and thy soul. Frequent society breeds familiarity, and familiarity increases love and delight, and makes us bold in our addresses. The chief end of this duty is to have acquaintance and fellowship with God, and therefore if thou come but seldom to it, thou we keep thyself a stranger still. When a man feels need of God, and must seek his help in time of cessity, then it is great encouragement to go to a. we know, and are acquainted with.

whom. I have gone this way many a time bef now. It is the same God that I daily converse wi and the way has been my daily walk. God kno me well enough, and I have some knowledge of hir ()n the other side, what a horror and discouragem will it be to the soul, when it is forced to fly to C in straits, to think, "Alas! I know not whither to I never went the way before. I have no acquai ance at the court of heaven. My soul knows: that God that I must speak to, and I fear he will : know my soul." But especially when we come die, and must immediately appear before this G and expect to enter into his eternal rest, then difference will plainly appear; then what a joy w it be to think, "I am going to the place that I ds conversed in; to the place from whence I tas such frequent delights; to that God whom I he met in my meditation so often. My heart hath be at heaven before now, and hath often tasted its rev ing sweetness; and if my eyes were so enlighten and my spirits so refreshed when I had but a tar what will it be when I shall feed on it freely?" the contrary, what a terror will it be to think, must die, and go I know not whither; from a pl where I am acquainted, to a place where I have familiarity or knowledge!" It is inexpressible h for to a dying man to have strange thoughts of (and heaven. I am persuaded the neglect of t duty so commonly, makes death, even to godly m snade to frequency in this duty. And as it prevent shyness between thee and God, so also, SECT. XI. It will prevent unskilfulness in duty itself. How awkwardly do men set their ha: to a work they are seldom employed in! Wher frequency will habituate thy heart to the work, nake it more easy and delightful. The hill w hade thee pant and blow at first going up, thou u asily run up when thou art once accustomed SECT. XII. Thou wilt also prevent the loss

heat and life thou hast obtained. If thou eat but once in two or three days, thou will lose thy strength as fast as it comes. If in holy meditation thou get near to Christ, and warm thy heart with the fire of love, and then come but seldom, thy former coldness will soon return; especially as the work is so spiritual, and against the bent of depraved nature. It is true, the intermixing of other duties, especially secret prayer, may do much to the keeping thy heart above; but meditation is the life of most other duties, and the view of heaven is the life of meditation.

SECT. XIII. 3. Choose also the most seasonable time. All things are beautiful and excellent in their season. Unseasonableness may loose the fruit of thy labour, may raise difficulties in the work, and may turn a duty to a sin. The same hour may be seasonable to one, and unseasonable to another. Servants and labourers must take that season which their business can best afford; either while at work or in travelling, or when they lie awake in the night. Such as can choose what time of the day they will, should observe when they find their spirits most active and fit for contemplation, and fix upon that as the stated time. I have always found that the fittest time for myself is the evening, from sun setting to the twilight. I the rather mention this, because it was the experience of a better and wiser man; for it is expressly said, "Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the even-tide," Genesis xxiv. 63. The Lord's day is exceedingly seasonable for this exercise. When should we more seasonably contemplate our rest, than on that day of rest which typifies it to us? It being a day appropriated to spiritual duties, methinks we should never exclude this duty which is so eminently spiritual. I verily think this is the chief work of a Christian Sabbath, and most agree while to the design of its positive institution. What able to the design of its positive institution. fitter time to converse with our Lord than on the Lord's day? What fitter day to ascend to heaven than that on which he arose from earth, and full-triumphed over death and hell? The fittest temper triumphed over death and hell?

is very nurtui to your source.

time on the Lord's day for idleness and vain discourse, were you but acquainted with this duty or contemplation, you would need no other pastime you would think the longest day short eneugh, and be sorry that the night had shortened your pleasure Christians, let heaven have more share in your Sab baths, where you must shortly keep your everlasting Sabbath. Use your Sabbaths as steps to glory, till you have passed them all, and are there arrived Especially you that are poor, and cannot take time in the week as you desire, see that you well improve this day; as your bodies rest from their labours, le your spirits seek after rest from God.

Secr. XIV. Besides the constant seasonablenes

of every day, and particularly every Lord's day there are also more peculiar seasons for heavenl contemplation.—As for instance: SECT. XV. When God hath more abundant

Warmed thy spirit with fire from above, then tho mayest soar with greater freedom. A little labor

SECT. XVI. Another peculiar season for this duty is, when thou art in a suffering, distressed, or tempted When should we take our cordials, but in time of fainting? When is it more seasonable to walk to heaven, than when we know not in what corner of the earth to live with comfort? Or when should our thoughts converse more above, than when they have nothing but grief below? Where should Noah's dove be but in the ark, when the waters cover all the earth, and she cannot find rest for the sole of her foot? What should we think on, but our Father's house, when we have not even the husks of the world to feed upon? Surely God sends thy afflictions to this very purpose. Happy art thou, poor man, if thou make this use of thy poverty! and theu that art sick, if thou so improve thy sickness! It is seasonable to go to the promised land, when our burdens are increased in Egypt, and our straits in the wilderness. Reader, if thou knewest what a cordial to thy griefs the serious views of glory are, thou wouldst less fear these harmless troubles, and more use that preserving, reviving, remedy. "In the multitude of my troubled thoughts within me, saith David, "thy comforts delight my soul," Ps. xciv. 19. "I reckon," saith Paul, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," Rom. viii. 18. "For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal,"2 Cor. iv. 16, 18.

SECT. XVII. And another season peculiarly fit for this heavenly duty is, when the messengers of Gov summon us to die. When should we more frequency sweeten our souls with the believing thoughts another life, than when we find that this is all so the delights of dying Christians are often sweetest they ever had. What a prophetical had dying Isaac and Jacob for their son. what a heavenly song and divine benedi. Moses conclude his life! What heavenly prayer had the disciples from their Lord, was about to leave them! When Paul was be offered up, what heavenly exhortation an did he give the Philippians, Timothy, and the of Ephesus! How near to heaven was John mos, but a little before his translation thither the general temper of the saints to be then n venly when they are nearest heaven. If it case, reader, to perceive thy dying time drawhere should thy heart now be but with Methinks thou shouldst even behold him by thee, and should bespeak him as thy fat husband, thy physician, thy friend. Methir shouldst, as it were, see the angels about th ing to perform their last office to thy so those angels which disdained not to carry in

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, yet the way is miry; therefore, obey his voice. and eat, and in the strength of that meat thou est "go to the mount of God;" and, like Moses, in the mount, whither thou goest up;" and say, meon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant dein peace; for my eye of faith hath seen thy saln," Luke ii. 29, 30. ст. XVIII. (III.) Concerning the fittest place neavenly contemplation, it is sufficient to say, the most convenient is some private retirement. spirits need every help, and to be freed from y hinderance in the work. If, in private prayer, st directs us to "enter into our closet, and shut door, that our Father may see us in secret," .. vi.; so should we do this in meditation. How i did Christ himself retire to some mountain, or erness, or other solitary place! I give not this ce for occasional meditation, but for that which is nd solemn. Therefore withdraw thyself from all ty, even that of godly men, that thou mayest le enjoy the society of thy Lord. If a student ot study in a crowd, who exerciseth only his inion and memory, much less shouldst thou be in owd, who art to exercise all the powers of thy and upon an object so far above nature. fled so far from superstitious solitude, that we even cast off the solitude of contemplative dem. We seldom read of God's appearing, by elf or by his angels, to any of his prophets or s in a crowd; but frequently when they were But observe for thyself what place best es with thy spirit, within doors or without. e's example, in going out to meditate in the field, l am persuaded, best suit with most. so much used a solitary garden, that even Juwhen he came to betray him, knew where to him; and though he took his disciples thither him, yet he was withdrawn from them for more devotions: John xviii. 1, 2; Luke xxii. 41. hough his meditation be not directly named y his praying, yet it is very clearly implied for his soul is first made serrowful with the bitter meditations on his sufferings and death, and then he poureth it out in prayer: Mark xiv 34, 35. So that Christ had his accustomed place, and, consequently, accustomed duty; and so must we: he hath a place that is solitary, whither he retireth himself, even from his own disciples; and so must we: his meditations go farther than his thoughts; they affect and pierce his heart and soul; and so must ours. Only there is a wide difference in the object; Christ meditates on the sufferings that our sins have deserved, so that the wrath of his Father passed through all his soul; but we are to meditate on the glory he hath purchased, that the love of the Father and the joy of the Spirit may enter at our thoughts, and revive our affections, and overflow our souls.

SECT. XIX. (IV.) I am next to advise thee concerning the preparations of thy heart for this heavenly contemplation. The success of the work much depends on the frame of thy heart. When man's heart had nothing in it to grieve the Spirit, it was then the delightful habitation of his Maker. God did not quit his residence there till man expelled him by unworthy provocations. There was no shyness or reserve till the heart grew sinful, and too loathsome a dungeon for God to delight in. And was this soul reduced to its former innocency, God would quickly return to his former habitation; yea, so far as it is renewed and repaired by the Spirit, and purged from its lusts, and beautified with his image, the Lord will vet acknowledge it as his own: Christ will manifest himself unto it, and the Spirit will take it for his temple and residence. So far as the heart is qualified for conversing with God, so far it usually enjoys him. "Therefore, with all diligence keep thy heart, for out of it are the issues of life," Prov. iv. 23. More particularly,

SECT. XX. 1. Get thy heart as clear from the world as thou canst. Wholly lay by the thoughts of thy business, troubles, enjoyments, and every thing that may take up any room in thy soul. Get it a

empty as thou possibly canst, that it may be the more capable of being filled with God. If thou couldst perform some outward duty with a piece of thy heart, while the other is absent, yet this duty above all I am sure thou canst not. When thou shalt go into am sure thou canst not. the mount of contemplation, thou wilt be like the covetous man at the heap of gold, who, when he might take as much as he could, lamented that he was able to carry no more; so thou wilt find so much of God and glory as thy narrow heart is able to contain, and almost nothing to hinder thy full possession, but the incapacity of thy own spirit. Then thou wilt think, "O that this understanding and these affections could contain more! It is more my unfitness than any thing else, that even this place is not my heaven. God is in this place, and I know it not. This mount is full of chariots of fire, but mine eyes are shut, and I cannot see them. O the words of love Christ hath to speak, and wonders of love he hath to show, but I cannot bear them yet! Heaven is ready for me, but my heart is unready for heaven." Therefore, reader. seeing thy enjoyment of God in this contemplation much depends on the capacity and disposition of thy heart, seek him here, if ever, with all thy soul. Thrust not Christ into the stable and the manger, as if thou hadst better guests for the chief rooms. Say to all thy worldly business and thoughts, as Christ to his disciples, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Or as Abraham to his servants, when he went to offer Isaac, "Abide ye here, and I will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." Even as the priests thrust king Uzziah out of the temple where he presumed to burn incense, when they saw the leprosy upon him; so do thou thrust those thoughts from the temple of thy heart, which have the badge of God's prohibition upon them.

Sect. XXI. 2. Be sure to set upon this work with the greatest solemnity of heart and mind. There no trifling in holy things. "God will be sanctifue in them that come nigh him," Lev. X. 3. The spiritual, excellent, soul-raising duties, are, if

most dangerous. Labour, therefore, to have the deepest apprehensions of the presence of God, and his incomprehensible greatness. If queen Eether must not draw near, till the king hold out the sceptre; think then with what reverence thou shouldst approach him, who made the worlds with the word of his mouth, who upholds the earth as in the palm of his hand, who keeps the sun, moon, and stars in their courses, and who sets bounds to the raging sea. Thou art going to converse with him, before whom the earth will quake, and the devils do tremble, and at whose bar thou and all the world must shortly stand, and be finally judged. O think, "I shall then have lively apprehensions of his majesty. My drowsy spirits will then be awakened, and my irreverence be laid aside; and why should I not now be roused with the sense of his greatness, and the dread of his name possess my soul?" Labour also to apprehend the greatness of the work which thou attemptest. and to be deeply sensible both of its importance and excellency. If thou wast pleading for thy life at the bar of an earthly judge, thou wouldst be serious; and yet that would be a trifle to this. If thou wast engaged in such a work as David against Goliath, on which the welfare of a kingdom depended; in itself considered, it were nothing to this. Suppose thou wast going to such a wrestling as Jacob's, or to see the sight which the three disciples saw in the mount; how seriously, how reverently, wouldst thou both approach and behold! If but an angel from heaven should appoint to meet thee, at the same time and place of thy contemplations, with what dread wouldst thou be filled! Consider, then, with what a spirit thou shouldst meet the Lord, and with what seriousness and awe thou shouldst daily converse with him. Consider, also, the blessed issue of the work; if it succeed, it will be thy admission into the presence of God, and the beginning of thy eterms glory on earth; a means to make thee live above t rate of other men. and fix thee in the next room the angels themselves, that thou mayest both live and die joyfully. The prize being so great, thy preparations should be answerable. There is none on earth live such a life of joy and blessedness, as those that are acquainted with this heavenly conversation. The joys of all other men are but like a child's plaything, a fool's laughter, or a sick man's dream of health. He that trades for heaven is the only gainer, and he that neglects it is the only loser. Ilow seriously, therefore, should this work be done!

CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT USE HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION MAKES OF CONSIDERATION, AFFECTIONS, SOLILOQUY, AND PRAYER.

SECT. I. The reader is invited to engage in heavenly contemplation; SECT. II. and to that end is, (I.) Directed in the use of consideration; SECT. III.—VIII. The great influence of which over the heart is represented in several instances: SECT. IX. Then (II.) It is shown how heavenly contemplation is promoted by the affections, particularly, SECT. XII. B. VIII. B. Desire: SECT. XII. S. Desire: SECT. XIII. S. Desire: SECT. XIII. A DESIRED SECT. XIII. A COLUMN IN A DESIRED SECT. SECT

SECT. I. Having set thy heart in tune, we now come to the music itself. Having get an appetite, now approach to the feast, and delight thy soul as with marrow and fatness. Come, for all things are now ready. Heaven and Christ, and the exceeding weight of glory, are before you. Do not make light of this invitation, nor begin to make excuses; whatever thou art, rich or poor, though in almshouses or hospitals, though in highways and hedges, my commission is, if possible, to compel you to come in; and blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom God! The manna lieth about your tents; walk of

gather it up, take it home and feed upon it. In order to this I am only to direct you how to use your consideration, and affection, your solilousy and prayer.

SECT. II. (I.) Consideration is the great instrument by which this heavenly work is carried on. This must be voluntary, and not forced. Some men consider unwillingly; so God will make the wicked consider their sins, when he shall "set them in order before their eyes," Psalm 1. 21, 22; so shall the damned consider of the excellency of Christ, whom they once despised, and of the eternal joys which they have foolishly lost. Great is the power which consideration hath for moving the affections, and impressing things on the heart; as will appear by the following particulars.

the door between the head and the heart. The understanding having received truths, lays them up in the memory, and consideration conveys them from thence to the affections. What excellency would there be in much learning and knowledge, if the obstructions between the head and the heart were but opened, and the affections did but correspond to the understanding! He is usually the best scholar, whose apprehension is quick, clear, and tenacious; but he is usually the best Christian, whose apprehension is the deepest and most affectionate, and who has the readiest passages, not so much from the car to the brain, as from that to the heart. And though the Spirit be the principal cause, yet on our part this passage must be opened by consideration.

Sect. III. 1. Consideration, as it were, opens

Sect. IV. 2. Consideration presents to the affections those things which are most important. The most delightful object does not entertain where it is not seen, nor the most joyful news affect him that does not hear it: but consideration presents to our view those things which were as absent, and brings them to the eye and ear of the soul. Are not Christ and glory affecting objects? Would they not work wonders upon the soul, if they were but clearly divonders upon the soul, if they were but clearly divonders.

covered, and our apprehensions of them were in some measure answerable to their worth? It is consideration that presents them to us. This is the Christian's perspective, by which he can see from earth to

SECT. V. 3. Consideration presents the most important things in the most affecting way. Consideration reasons the case with a man's own heart. When a believer would reason his heart to heavenly contemplation, how many arguments offer themselves from God to Christ, from each of the divine perfections, from our former and present state, from promises, from present sufferings and enjoyments, from hell and heaven! Every thing offers itself to promote our joy, and consideration is the hand to draw them all out; it adds one reason to another till the scales turn. This it does when persuading to joy, till it hath silenced all our distrust and sorrows. and your cause for rejoicing lies plain before you. If another's reasoning is powerful with us, though we are not certain whether he intends to inform or deceive us; how much more should our own reasoning prevail with us, when we are so well acquainted with our own intentions! Nay, how much more should God's reasoning work upon us, which we are sure cannot deceive, or be deceived! Now, consideration is but the reading over and repeating God's reasons to our hearts. As the prodigal had many and strong reasons to plead with himself, why he should return to his father's house; so have we to plead with our affections, to persuade them to our Father's everlasting mansion.

SECT. VI. 4. Consideration exalts reason to its just authority. It helps to deliver it from its captivity to the senses, and sets it again on the throne of the soul. When reason is silent, it is usually subject; for when it is asleep, the senses domineer. But consideration awakes our reason, till, like Samson, it rouses up itself, and breaks the bonds of senality, and bears down the delusions of the fix what strength can the lion exert while asly

What is a king, when dethroned, more than man? Spiritual reason, excited by medita not fancy or fleshly sense, must judge of joys. Consideration exalts the objects of f comparatively diagraces the objects of sem most inconsiderate men are most sensual. easy and common to sin against knowle against sober, strong, persevering considera seldom offend.

SECT. VII. 5. Consideration makes reast and active. Before it was as standing we now as a stream which violently bears dow fore it. Before it was as the stones in the but now like that out of David's sling, which the Goliath of our unbelief in the foreht wicked men continue wicked, because the not reason into act and exercise; so godly uncomfortable, because they let their restaith lie asleep, and do not stir them up to a this work of meditation. What fears, sorrigors, will our very dreams excite! How much we would serious meditation affect us!

SECT. VIII. 6. Consideration can cont persevere in this rational employment. M holds reason and faith to their work, and I fire till it thoroughly burns. To run a few s not get a man heat, but walking an hour n though a sudden occasional thought of he not raise our affections to any spiritual i meditation can continue our thoughts till o grow warm. Thus you see the powerful ter consideration to produce this great elevatic soul in heavenly contemplation.

SECT. IX. (II.) Let us next see how the venly work is promoted by the particular enths affections. Is it by consideration that have recourse to the memory, and from the those heavenly doctrines, which we intensified the subject of our meditation: such as a cternal life, descriptions of the saints' grant of the saints' grant life, descriptions of the saints' grant

judgment, that it may deliberately view them over, and take an exact survey, and determine uprightly concerning the perfection of our celestial happiness, against all the dictates of flesh and sense, and so as to magnify the Lord in our hearts, till we are filled with a holy admiration. But the principal thing is to exercise not merely our judgment, but our faith, in the truth of our everlasting rest; by which I mean, both the truth of the promises, and of our own personal interest in them, and title to them. If we did really and firmly believe, that there is such a glory, and that within a few days our eyes should behold it, O what passions would it raise within us! What astonishing apprehensions of that life would it produce! What love, what longing, would it excite within us! O how it would actuate every affection! How it would transport us with joy upon the least assurance of our title! Never expect to have love and joy move, when faith stands still, which must lead the way. Therefore daily exercise faith, and set before it the freeness of the promise, God's urging all to accept it, Christ's gracious disposition, all the evidences of the love of Christ, his faithfulness to his engagements, and the evidences of his love in ourselves; lay all these together, and think whether they do not testify the good will of the Lord concerning our salvation, and may not properly be pleaded against our unbelief. Thus when the judgment hath determined, and faith hath apprehended the truth of our happiness, then may our meditation proceed to raise our affections, and particularly, love, desire, hope, courage or boldness, and joy.

SECT. X. 1. Love is the first affection to be excited in heavenly contemplation. The object of it is goodness. Here, Christian, is the soul-reviving part of thy work. Go to thy memory, thy judgment, and thy laith, and from them produce the excellencies of thy rest; present these to thy affection of love, and thou wilt find thyself as it were in another work speak out, and love can hear. Do but reveal things, and love can see. It is the brutish lovents.

the world that is blind: Divine love is exceeding quick-sighted. Let thy faith take hold of thy heart and show it the sumptuous buildings of thy eternal habitation, and the glorious ornaments of thy Father's house, even the mansions Christ is preparing, and the honours of his kingdom; let thy faith lead thy heart into the presence of God, and as near as then possibly canst, and say to it, "Behold the Ancient of Days, the Lord Jehovah, whose name is, I AM. This is he, who made all the worlds with his word, who upholds the earth, who rules the nations, who disposes of all events, who subdues his foes, who controls the swelling waves of the sea, who governs the winds, and causes the sun to run its race, and the stars to know their courses. This is he who loved thee from everlasting, formed thee in the womb, gave thee this soul, brought thee forth, showed thee the light, and ranked thee with the chief of his earthly creatures; who endued thee with thy understanding, and beautified thee with his gifts, who maintains thy life and all its comforts, and distinguishes thee from the most miserable and vilest of men." O here is an object worthy love! Here shouldst thou even pour out thy soul in love! Here it is impossible for thes to love too much! This is the Lord who hath blessed thee with his benefits, spread thy table in the sight of thine enemies, and made thy cup overflow! This is he whom angels and saints praise, and the heavenly host for ever magnify! Thus do thou expatiate on the praises of God, and open his excellencies to thine heart, till the holy fire of love begins to kindle in thy breast.

SECT. XI. If thou feelest thy life not yet burn, lead thy heart farther, and show it the Son of the living God, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; show it the King of saints on the throne of his glory; the First and the Last, who is, and was, of his glory; the First and the Last, who is, and we hold he lives for evermore; who hath made thy peace the blood of his cross, and hath prepared the

or peace! Dra Dost thou not hear his that bade Thomas come near, and see the nails, and put his finger into his wound: that calls to thee, "Come near, and view thy Saviour, and be not faithless, but "Peace be unto thee, fear not, it is I." upon him. Dost thou not know him! It brought thee up from the pit of hell, rev sentence of thy damnation, bore the cur thou shouldst have borne, restored thee to 1 ing thou hadst forfeited, and purchased vancement which thou must inherit for eve dost thou not yet know him? his hands were his head, his side, his heart were pierced, these marks thou mightest always know him. thou not remember when he found thee lying blood, and took pity on thee, and dressed thy v and brought thee home, and said unto thee Hast thou forgotten since he wounded hin cure thy wounds, and let out his own blood thy bleeding? If thou knowest the voice, the bar

SECT. XII. How often hath thy Lord like Hagar, sitting and weeping, and givin soul for lost, and he opened to thee a we solation, and also opened thine eyes to see often, in the posture of Elijah, desirir out of thy misery, and he hath spread the of unexpected relief, and sent thee on his freshed and encouraged! How often, in t the prophet's servants, crying out, Alas! 1 we do, for a host doth encompass us? an opened thine eyes to see more for thee tha thee! How often, like Jonah, peevish and thy life, and he hath mildly said, "Dost to be angry with me, or murmur against m often hath he set thee on watching and pr penting and believing, and when he hath hath found thee asleep, and yet he hath co neglect with a mantle of love, and gentl for thee, that the spirit is willing, but th weak! Can thy heart be cold when thou tl this? Can it contain, when thou remembe boundless compassions? Thus, reader, h the goodness of Christ to thy heart; plead thy frozen soul, till with David thou canst a heart was hot within me; while I was mu fire burned." If this will not rouse up thy hast all Christ's personal excellencies to ad particular mercies to thyself, all his sweet relations to thee, and the happiness of thy ing abode with him. Only follow them cle heart. Deal with it as Christ did with Pe he thrice asked him, "Lovest thou me?" t grieved, and answers, "Lord, thou know love thee:" so grieve and shame thy heart stupidity, till thou canst truly say, " I know Lord knows that I love him."

SECT. XIII. 2. The next affection to' in heavenly contemplation, is desire. The it is goodness considered as absent, or tained. If love be hot, desire will think with thyself, "What have I

incomprehensible glory! O the transcendent beauty! O blessed souls that now enjoy it! who see a thousand times more clearly what I have seen at a distance, and through dark interposing clouds. What a difference between my state and theirs! I am sighing, and they are singing; I am offending, and they are pleasing God. I am a spectacle of pity, like a Job or a Lazarus, but they are perfect and without blemish. I am here entangled in the love of the world, while they are swallowed up in the love of God. They have none of my cares and fears; they weep not in secret; they languish not in sorrows; these tears are wiped away from their eyes. O happy! a thousand times happy souls! Alas, that I must dwell in sinful flesh, when my brethren and companions dwell with God! How far out of sight and reach of their high enjoyment do I here live! What poor feeble thoughts have I of God! What cold affections towards him. How little have I of that life, that love, that joy, in which they continually live! How soon doth that little depart, and leave me in thicker darkness. Now and then a spark falls upon my heart, and while I gaze upon it, it dies, or rather my cold heart quenches it. But they have their light in this light, and drink continually at the spring of joys. Here we are vexing each other with quarrels, when they are of one heart and voice, and daily sound forth the hallelujahs of heaven with perfeet harmony. O what a feast hath my faith beheld, and what a famine is yet in my spirit! O blessed souls! I may not, I dare not, envy your happiness. I rather rejoice in my brethren's prosperity, and am glad to think of the day when I shall be admitted into your fellowship. I wish not to displace you, but to be so happy as to be with you. Why must I stay and weep and wait? My Lord is gone: he hath left this earth, and is entered into his glory; my brethren are gone; my friends are there; my hone, my hope, my all is there. When I am so far di tant from my God, wonder not what aileth me, for now complain; an ignorant Micah will do so to 270 CUNTEMPLATION PROMOTED idol, and shall not my soul do so for the living (Had I no hope of enjoyment, I would go hide m in the deserts, and lie and howl in some obscure derness, and spend my days in fruitless wishes; since it is the land of my promised rest, and the I must myself be advanced to, and my soul d near and is almost at it, I will love and long, I look and desire, I will be breathing, "How Lord! how long wilt thou suffer this soul to pan groan, and not open to him who waits, and lon be with thee!" Thus, Christian reader, let thoughts aspire, till thy soul longs, as David, that one would give me to drink of the wells of vation!" And till thou canst say as he did, "I longed for thy salvation, O Lord," Psalm exix. And as the mother and brethren of Christ, v they could not come at him because of the multisent to him, saying, "Thy mother and bret stand without desiring to see thee;" so let thy sage to him be, and he will own thee; for he said, "They that hear my word, and do it, are mother and my brethren," Luke viii. 20, 21.

SECT. XIV. 3. Another affection to be exerin heavenly contemplation, is hope. This help support the soul under sufferings, animates it to greatest difficulties, gives it a firmness in the shaking trials, enlivens it in duties, and is the spring that sets all the wheels a-going. Who w believe or strive for heaven, if it were not for hope that he hath to obtain it? Who would 1 but for the hope to prevail with God? If your dies, your duties die, your endeavours die, your die, and your soul dies. And if your hope be n exercise, but asleep, it is next to dead. Christian reader, when thou art winding up affections to heaven, forget not to give one lift to hope. Think thus, and reason thus with thy heart: Why should I not confidently and com bly hope, when my soul is in the hands of s passionate a Saviour, and when the kingdo the disposal of so bountiful a God'? Did

or my danger, when I never feared it, b would have me escape it? Did he not m my happiness, when I had no thoughts of i he would have me enjoy it? How ofter drawn me to himself, and his Christ, who drawn backward! how hath his Spirit in solicited my heart! And would he have this if he had been willing that I should Should I not hope if an honest man had me something in his power? And shall I when I have the covenant and oath of Go true the glory is out of sight; we have no the mansions of the saints; but is the promis more certain than our sight? We must not by sight, but by hope, and "hope that is se hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet l But if we hope for that we see not, then do patience wait for it." Rom. viii. 24, 25. I ha ashamed of my hope in an arm of flesh, but the promise of God "maketh not ashamed," 5. In my greatest sufferings I will save "The go on all will will be deed dwell with the reach why do I why and walland within the reach why do I why and walland within the reach why and walland will all the work? I pet out of the work? What me or agray will may enemies resistance? What me or agray will may enemies resistance of with by me, can be through at resistance of with by me, can be through and pet of the work? What me, or of single the work? What he work of single the work of the work? What he work is the work of single things are against up to the work of single work and therefore had a gainst me, the work of the

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BY RELIGIOUS AFFECTIONS.

h the difficulties of the work? Is an rd for Omnipotence? May not Peter h a the sea, if Christ give the word of com ie begin to sink, is it from the weakness or the smallness of his faith? Do I not w to be turned into hell, if mortal threats ca thither? Do I not well deserve to be heaven, if I will be frightened from them reproach of tongues? What if it were mother, or husband, or wife, or the neare have in the world, (if they may be called i would draw me to damnation,) should I i all that would keep me from Christ? friendship countervail the enmity of God. comfort to my condemned soul? Shall I to the desires of men, and only harden my the Lord? Let them beseech me upon t I will scorn to stop my course to behold t shut my ears to their cries: Let them flatte let them draw out tongues or swords age am resolved, in the strength of Christ through and look upon them as dust: If entice me with preferment, even with the of the world, I will no more regard ther dung of the earth. O blessed rest! O glor Who would sell thee for dreams and shade would be enticed or affrighted from the would not strive, and fight, and watch, ar that with violence, even to the last breat to obtain thee? Surely none but those thee not, and believe not thy glory."

Sect. XVI. 5. The last affection to be in heavenly contemplation, is joy. Lo hope, and courage, all tend to raise our joy so desirable to every man by nature, and tally necessary to constitute our happin hope I need not say much to persuade thing that would make your life delighting you, therefore, already convinced sures of the flesh are brutish and perically your solid and lasting joy must be firstead of persuading, I shall process.

An medicus. and home. Will God me such a glory an do I not law up the loins of not I set upon valiantly break nld stop me, or r against me in , or will he not? can be against sin, almost all ily God and his doth that work ourse to heaven. God is for men work succeed! wn strength, or by Lord? And hat strengthens ed by au ene but was be esh urge me

Reader, if thou hast managed well the former thou art got within sight of thy rest; thou be the truth of it; thou art convinced of its excel thou art fallen in love with it; thou longest at thou hopest for it; and thou art resolved to ve courageously for obtaining it. But is there any for joy in this? We delight in the good we po it is present good that is the object of joy; and wilt say, "Alas! I am yet without it." But t little farther with thyself. Is it nothing to I deed of gift from God? Are his infallible pro no ground of joy? Is it nothing to live in dai pectations of entering into the kingdom? Is n assurance of being hereafter glorified a suf-ground for inexpressible joy? Is it not a deli the heir of a kingdom to think of what he mus possess, though at present he little differ from vant? Have we not both command and examp "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God?" Rom, xii. 12.

SECT. XVII. Here then, reader, take thy once more, and carry it to the top of the hi mount; show it the kingdom of Christ, and the of it, and say to it, " All this will thy Lord give who hast believed in him, and been a worship him. "It is the Father's good pleasure to give this kingdom," Luke xii. 32. Seest thou th tonishing glory which is above thee? All this own inheritance. This crown is thine; these plea are thine; this company, this beautiful place, a thine! because thou art Christ's, and Christ is t when thou wast united to him, thou hadst all with him." Thus take thy heart into the la promise; show it the pleasant hills and fruitful va show it the clusters of grapes which thou hast ered, to convince it that it is a blessed land, fle with better than milk and honey: " Enter the ga the holy city; walk through the streets of the Jerusalem, walk about Sion, and go round about tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwa sider her palaces; that thou mayest tell it to Psalm xlviii. 12, 13. Hath it not the glo

ot her light like unto a stone most precious, e a jasper stone, clear as crystal? See the foundations of her walls, and in them the f the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the of the walls of it are of jasper; and the city gold like unto clear glass, and the foundations iished with all manner of precious stones. twelve gates are twelve pearls, every several f one pearl; and the street of the city is pure it were transparent glass. There is no tem-; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb temple of it. "Ithath no need of the sun, of the moon, in it; for the glory of God doth t, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and the of them which are saved shall walk in the These sayings are faithful and true. And 1 God of the holy prophets sent his angels and Son, to show unto his servants the things ust shortly be done," Rev. xxi. 23, 24; xxii.6. r to all this, "This is thy rest, O my soul! must be the place of thy everlasting habi-Let all the sons of Sion rejoice, let the rs of Jerusalem be glad; for "great is the id greatly to be praised in the city of our God, ountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situajoy of the whole earth is Mount Sion; God is n her palaces for a refuge," Psalm xlviii. 1-3. XVIII. The soul that Yet proceed on. cends frequently, and runs familiarly through ets of the heavenly Jerusalem, visiting the is and prophets, saluting the apostles, and ; the armies of martyrs. So do thou lead on t as from street to street; bring it into the f the great King; lead it, as it were, from to chamber. Say to it, "Here must I lodge; st I live; here must I praise; here must I love eloved: I must shortly be one of this heavenly gaomAd be better skilled in the music. ed company must I take up my place; my to into make up the melody. My tears be wised away; my groans be turned to an interpretation of the managed to the ma ; my cottage of clay be changed to

palace; my prison rags to these splendid robes my sordid flesh shall be put off, and such a sur

spiritual body be put on: ' For the former thing here passed away, Rev. xxi. 1. 'Glorious thing spoken of thee, O city of God!' Psalm lxxxv When I look upon this glorious place, what a hill and a dungeon methinks is earth! O what o ence betwixt a man, feeble, pained, groaning, d rotting in the grave, and one of these trium shining saints! 'Here shall I drink of the riv pleasures, the streams whereof make glad the of God,' Psal. xxxvi. 8. Must Israel, under the age of the law, serve the Lord with joyfulnes with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all th Deut. xxviii. 47. Surely I shall serve him with fulness and gladness of heart, for the abundan glory. Did persecuted saints take joyfully the ing of their goods? Heb. x. 34. And shall not I joyfully such a full reparation of all my losses? it a celebrated day wherein the Jews rested their enemies, because it was turned unto them sorrow to joy, and from mourning unto a good Esther ix. 22. What a day then will that be to soul, whose rest and change will be inconcein greater! When the wise men saw the star tha to Christ, they rejoiced with exceeding great Matt, ii. 10: but I shall shortly see him, who is self the bright and morning Star: Rev. xxii. 16 the disciples departed from the sepulchre with joy, when they had but heard the Lord was risen the dead, Matt. xxviii. 7, 8; what will be my when I shall see him reigning in glory, and m raised to a blessed communion with him. I indeed have beauty for ashes, the oil of jo mourning, and the garment of praise for the spin heaviness; and Sion shall be made an eternal e lency, a joy of many generations: Isa. Isi. 3; Is Why then do I not arise from the dust, and ees complaints? Why do I not trample on vain d and feed on the foreseen delights of glory? not my life a continual joy, and the savour

perpetually upon my spirit?"

SECT. XIX. Let me here observe, that there is no necessity to exercise these affections, either exactly in this order, or all at one time. Sometimes one of thy affections may need more exciting, or may be more lively than the rest; or, if thy time be short, one may be exercised one day, and another upon the next; all which must be left to thy prudence to determine. Thou hast also an opportunity, if inclined to make use of it, to exercise opposite and more mixed affections; such as-hatred of sin, which would deprive thy soul of these immortal joys; godly fear, lest thou shouldst abuse thy mercy; godly shame and grief, for having abused it; unfeigned repentance; selfindignation; jealousy over thy heart; and pity for those who are in danger of losing these immortal joys. SECT. XX. (III.) We are also to take notice,

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who are in danger of losing these immorial joys.
SECT. XX. (111.) We are also to take notice, how heavenly contemplation is promoted by soliloquy and prayer. Though consideration be the chief instrument in this work, yet, by itself, it is not likely to affect the heart. In this respect contemplation is like preaching, where the mere explaining of truths and duties is seldom attended with suc success, as the lively application of them to the cor science; and especially when a Divine blessing earnestly sought for to accompany such application SECT. XXI. 1. By soliloquy, or a pleading t case with thyself, thou must in thy meditation quick

case with thyself, thou must in thy meditation quick thy own heart. Enter into a serious debate with Plead with it in the most moving and affecting I guage, and urge it with the most powerful wouncents. It is what holy men of Thus David. "Wh

every good master or father of a famil preacher to his own family; so every go is a good preacher to his own soul. very same method which a minister sh his preaching to others, every Christian deavour after in speaking to himself. matter and manner of the most heart-affe ter; let him be as a pattern for your im the same way that he takes with the h people, do thou also take with thy own this in thy heavenly contemplation; exp self the things on which thou dost medit thy faith in them from Scripture; and them to thyself, according to their nati own necessity. There is no need to ob this, from a sense of thy own inability. God command thee, "to teach the Scr gently unto thy children, and talk of thou sittest in thine house, and when t by the way, and when thou liest down thou risest up?" Deut. vi. 7. And if tho some ability to teach thy children, mu teach thyself; and if thou caust talk of d to others, why not also to thy own heart SECT. XXII. 2. Heavenly contempl

promoted by speaking to God in prayer by speaking to ourselves in soliloquy. prayer may very properly be intermixed tation, as a part of the duty. How often David, in the same psalm, sometimes p his soul, and sometimes with God? bids us speak to ourselves "in psalms, and spiritual songs," Eph. v. 19; and r may also speak to God in them. This ke sensible of the Divine presence, and to to quicken and raise it. As God is object of our thoughts, so our viewing of ing to him, and pleading with him, mor soul, and excites the affections, than of meditation. Though we remain u we plead the case with ourselves; y our speech to God, it may strike t

ne boliness and majesty of him whom we speak to, ay cause both the matter and words to pierce the eeper. When we read that Isaac went out to meditte in the field, the margin says to pray; for the lebrew word signifies both. Thus in our meditaons, to intermix soliloquy and prayer, (sometimes peaking to our own hearts, and sometimes to God,) , I apprehend, the highest step we can advance to this heavenly work. Nor should we imagine it ill be as well to take up with prayer alone, and lay side meditation. For they are distinct duties, and just both of them be performed. We need one as ell as the other, and therefore shall wrong ourselves y neglecting either. Besides, the mixture of them, ke music, will be more engaging; as the one serves) put life into the other. And our speaking to oursives in meditation, should go before our speaking God in prayer. For want of attending to this due rder, men speak to God with far less reverence and ffection than they would speak to an angel if he nould appear to them; or to a judge, if they were peaking for their lives. Speaking to the God of eaven in prayer is a weightier duty than most are ware of.

CHAPTER XV.

EAVENLY CONTEMPLATION ASSISTED BY SENSIBLE OBJECTS, AND GUARDED AGAINST A TREACHEROUS HEART.

RT. I. As it is difficult to maintain a lively impression of heavenly things, therefore, SECT. II. (I.) Heavenly contemplation may be assisted by sensible objects: SECT. III. 1. If we draw strong suppositions from sense; and SECT. IV.—XI. 3. If we compare the objects of sense with the objects of fairly, several instances of which are produced as the second of the

SECT. I. The most difficult part of heavenly of plation is to maintain a lively sense of heaves upon our hearts. It is easier merely to

of heaven a whole day, than to be lively and affectionate in those thoughts a quarter of an hour. Faith is imperfect, for we are renewed but in part; and goes against a world of resistance; and being supernatural, is prone to decline and languish, unless it be continually excited. Sense is strong, according to the strength of the flesh; and being natural, continues while nature continues. The objects of faith are far off; but those of sense are nigh. We must go as far as heaven for our joys. To rejoice in what we never saw, nor ever knew the man that did see, and this upon a mere promise in the Bible, is not so easy as to rejoice in what we see and possess. It must therefore be a point of spiritual prudence, to call in sense to the assistance of faith. It will be a good work, if we can make friends of these usual enemies, and make them instruments for raising us to God, which are so often the means of drawing us from him. Why hath God given us either our senses, or their common objects, if they might not be serviceable to his praise? Why doth the Holy Spirit describe the glory of the New Jerusalem, in expressions that are even grateful to the flesh? Is it that we might think heaven to be made of gold and pearl? or that saints and angels eat and drink? No, but to help us to conceive of them as we are able, and to use these borrowed phrases as a glass, in which we must see the things themselves imperfectly represented, till we come to an immediate and perfect sight. And besides showing how heavenly contemplation may be assisted by sensible objects,-this chapter will also show how it may be preserved from a wandering heart.

SECT. II. (1.) In order that heavenly contemplation may be assisted by sensible objects, let me only arlvise—to draw strong suppositions from sense, and to compare the objects of sense with the objects of faith.

SECT. III. 1. For the helping of thy affections in L-avenly contemplation, draw as strong suppositions as possible from thy senses. Think on those above, as boldly as Scripture hath expressors above, as boldly as Scripture

them. Bring down thy conceptions to the reach of sense. Both love and joy are promoted by familiar acquaintance. When we attempt to think of God and glory without the Scripture manner of representing them, we are lost, and have nothing to fix our hearts upon; we set them so far from us that our thoughts are strange, and we are ready to say, what is above us is nothing to us. To conceive of God and glory only as above our conception, will beget but little love; or as above our love, will produce little joy. Therefore put Christ no farther from you than he hath put himself, lest the Divine nature be again inaccessible. Think of Christ as in our own glorified nature. Think of glorified saints as men made perfect. Suppose thyself a companion with John, in his survey of the New Jerusalem, and viewing the thrones, the majesty, the heavenly hosts, the shining splendour which he saw. Suppose thyself is fellow-traveller into the celestial kingdom; and hat thou hadst seen all the saints in their white obes, with palms in their hands; and that thou hadst eard these songs of Moses, and of the Lamb. If tou hadst really seen and heard these things, in hat a rapture wouldst thou have been! And the ore seriously thou puttest this supposition to thyf, the more will thy meditation elevate thy heart. not, like the papists, draw them in pictures; but the liveliest picture of them in thy mind that u possibly canst, by contemplating the Scripture punt of them, till thou eanst say, "Methinks I a glimpse of glory! Methinks I hear the shouts by and praise, and even stand by Abraham and id. Peter and Paul, and other triumphant souls! links I even see the Son of God appearing in louds, and the world standing at his bar to retheir doom; and hear him say, "Come 70 d of my Father; and see them go rejoicing e joy of their Lord! My very dreams of these have sometimes greatly affected me.; and of these just suppositions much more affect hat if I had seen, with Paul, those unutter 3? Or. with Stephen, had seen heaves whoremaster rather part with his credit, estate, and alvation, than with his brutish delights? If the vay to hell can afford such pleasure, what then are he pleasures of the saints in heaven! If the covetous nan hath so much pleasure in his wealth, and the mbitious man in places of power and titles of honour; what then have the saints in everlasting tree. ures, and in heavenly honours, where we shall he et above principalities and powers, and be made the lorious spouse of Christ! How delightfully will the oluptuous follow their recreations from morning to ight, or sit at their cards and dice, nights and days gether! O the delight we shall have when we me to our rest, in beholding the face of the living od, and singing forth praises unto him and the mb!" Compare also the delights above with the ful and moderate delights of sense. Think with self, "How sweet is food to my taste when I as igry! especially if it be, as Isaac said, such as e, which my temperance and appetite incline

ASSISTED BY SENSIBLE OBJECTS.

What delight, then, must my soul hav? upon Christ, the living bread, and in him at his table in his kingdom! Wa pottage so sweet to Esau in his hunger, tl buy it at so dear a rate as his birth-r. highly, then, should I value this never per How pleasant is drink in the extremity scarcely to be expressed; enough to strength of Samson revive! O how do will be to my soul to drink of that fount i water, which whose drinketh it shall this How delightful are grateful odours to the music to the ear; or beautiful sights to What fragrance, then, hath the precious which is poured on the head of our glorific and which must be poured on the head saints, and will fill all heaven with its ode delightful is the music of the heavenly h pleasing will be those real beauties about glorious the building not made with hands that God himself dwells in, the walks and in the city of God, and the celestial paradi SECT. V. Compare also the delights a

Sect. V. Compare also the delights a thousand the delights of sense; but how me are the delights of heaven! Think, then, Archimedes be so taken up with his ma

night, almost forgetful of meet, drink, or also What delights are there, then, at God's right has where we shall know in a moment all that is to 'l known!" Compare also the delights above, with the delights of morality, and of the natural affliction What delight had many sober heathens in the re and practice of moral duties, so that they took I alone for an honest man who did well through the love of virtue, and not merely for fear of punis ment; yea, so much valued was this mortal virts that they thought man's chief happiness consisted in Think, then, "What excellency will there be in our heavenly perfection, and in that uncreated perfection of God, which we shall behold! What swe ness is there in the exercise of natural love, whether to children, parents, yoke-fellows, or intimate friends! Does David say of Jonathan, Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women? Did the soul of Jonathan cleave to David? Had Christ himself one disciple whom he especially loved, and who was wont to lean on his breast? If, then, the delights of close and cordial friendship be so great, what delight shall we have in the friendship of the Most High, and in our mutual intimacy with Jesus Christ, and in the dearest love of the saints! Surely this will be a stricter friendship, and these more lively and desirable friends than ever the sun beheld; and both our affections to our Father and Saviour, and especially theirs to us, will be such as we never knew here. If one angel could destroy a host, the affections of spirits must also be proportionably stronger, so that we shall then love a thousand times more ardently than we can now. As all the attributes and works of God are incomprehensible, so is this of love; he will love us infinitely beyond our most perfect love to him. What, then, will there be in this mutual love!"

SECT. VI. Compare also the excellencies of heaven with those glorious works of creation which our eyes now behold. What wisdom, power, and goodness are manifested therein! How does the majest, the Creator shine in this fabric of the world!

so full of mysterious worth, what is that place re God himself dwells, and which is prepared for men made perfect with Christ! What glory is e in the least of yonder stars! What a vast rendent body is yonder moon, and every planet! at an inconceivable glory hath the sun! But all is nothing to the glory of heaven. Yonder sun t there be laid aside as useless. Yonder is but cness to the lustre of my Father's house. I shall elf be as glorious as that sun. This whole earth ut my Father's footstool. This thunder is nog to his dreadful voice. These winds are nothing ie breath of his mouth. If the sending rain, and ing the sun to rise on the just and on the unjust, so wonderful, how much more wonderful and ious will that sun be, which must shine on none saints and angels! Compare also the enjoyments ve, with the wonders of providence in the church world. Would it not be an astonishing sight e the sea stand as a wall on the right hand and he left, and the dry land appear in the midst, and people of Israel pass safely through, and Phaand his host drowned? or to have seen the ten ues of Egypt? or the rock gushing forth streams? nanna and quails rained from heaven? or the h opening and swallowing up the wicked? But hall see far greater things than these: not only a more wonderful but more delightful. There s more wonderful, but more delightful. be no blood, nor wrath, intermingled: nor shall y out, as the men of Beth-shemesh, who is stand before this holy Lord God? serv

ment? Or the dial of Ahaz go back ten degrees? But we shall see when there shall be no sun; or rather shall behold for ever a sun of infinitely greater brightness. What a life should we have, if we could have drought or rain at our prayers; or have fire from heaven to destroy our enemies, as Elijah had; or raise the dead as Elisha; or miraculously cure diseases, and speak all languages, as the apostles! Alas, these are nothing to the wonders we shall see and possess with God, and all of them wonders of goodness and love. We shall ourselves be the subjects of more wonderful mercies than any of these. Jonah was raised but from a three days' burial in the belly of a fish; but we shall be raised from a many years' rottenness and dust; and that dust exalted to the glory of the sun; and that glory perpetuated through eternity. Surely, if we observe but common providences, as the motions of the sun, the tides of the sea, the standing of the earth, the watering it with rain as a garden, the keeping in order a wicked, confused world, with many others, they are all admirable. But what are these to the Sion of God, the vision of the Divine Majesty, and the order of the heavenly hosts? Add to these, those particular providences which thou hast thyself enjoyed and recorded through thy life, and compare them with the mercies thou shalt have above. Look over the mercies of thy youth and riper age, of thy prosperity and adversity; of thy several places and relations; are they not excellent and innumerable, rica and engaging? How sweet was it to thee, when God resolved thy doubts; scattered thy fears; prevented the inconveniences into which thy own counsel would have cast thee; eased thy pains; healed thy sickness; and raised thee up as from death and the grave! Think, then, "Are all these so sweet and precious, that without them my life would have been a perpetual misery?
Hath his providence on earth lifted me so high, and his gentleness made me so great? How sweet, then, will his glorious presence be! How high will his external love exalt me! And how great shall I caternal love exalt me! And how great shall I my made in communion with his greatness! If my ľ

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grimage and warfare have such mercies, what shall I find in my home, and in my triumph? If God communicates so much to me while I remain a sinner, what will he bestow when I am a perfected saint? If I have had so much at such a distance from him, what shall I have in his immediate presence, where I shall ever stand before his throne?"

SECT. VII. Compare the joys above with the

comforts thou hast here received in ordinances.

Hath not the Bible been to thee as an open fountain flowing with comforts day and night? What suitable promises have come into thy mind: so that, with David, thou mayest say, "Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in mine affliction?" Think, then, "If his word be so full of consolations, what overflowing spring shall we find in God himself! If his letters are so comfortable, what will the glories of his presence be! If the promise is so sweet, what will the performance be! If the testament of our Lord, and our charter for the kingdom, be so comfortable, what will be our possession of the kingdom itself!" Think farther, "What delights have I also found in the word preached? When I have sat under a heavenly, heart-searching teacher, how hath my heart been warmed! Methinks I have felt myself almost in heaven. How often have I gone to the congregation troubled in spirit, and returned joyful! How often have I gone doubting, and God hath sent me home persuaded of his love in Christ! What cordials have I met with to animate me in every conflict! If but the face of Moses shine so gloriously, what glory is there in the face of God! If the feet of them that publish peace, that bring good tidings of salvation, be beautiful, how beautiful is the face of the Prince of peace? this treasure be so precious in earthen vessels, what is that treasure laid up in heaven! Blessed are the eyes that see what is seen there, and the cars that hear the things that are heard there. There sha I hear Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, Peter, Pa

not preaching to gainsayers, in imprisonment, pecution, and reproach, but triumphing in the pr

of him that hath raised them to honour and Think also, "What joy is it to have accurate acceptance in prayer; that I may always go and open my case, and unbosom my soul to hi my most faithful friend! But it will be a m speakable joy when I shall receive all b without asking, and all my necessities and r will be removed, and when God himself will portion and inheritance of my soul. As : Lord's supper, what a privilege is it to be a to sit at his table!—to have his covenant scale there! But all the life and comfort there is to me of the comforts hereafter. O the differen tween the last supper of Christ on earth, a marriage supper of the Lamb at the great day! his room will be the glorious heavens; his atte all the hosts of angels and saints; no Judas, furnished guest comes there, but the humble ers must sit down by him, and their feast their mutual loving and rejoicing." Concern communion of saints, think with thyself, " I pleasure is it to live with intelligent and he Christians! David says of such, they were delight. O what a delightful society then have above. Had I but seen Job on the dr what a mirror of patience! and what will it be him in glory! How delightful to have hear and Silas singing in the stocks! How much r hear them sing praises in heaven! What mele David make on his harp! But how much me lodious to hear that sweet singer in the he choir! What would I have given for an hou converse with Paul when he wast just come from the third heaven! But I must shortly se things myself, and possess what I see." Once think of praising God in concert with his "What if I had been in the place of those she who saw and heard the heavenly hosts singing to God in the highest, and on earth peace, towards men! But I shall see and hear mor things. How blessed should I have thou had I heard Christ in his thanksgivings to

How much more, when I shall hear him pronounce me blessed! If there was such a joy at bringing back the ark, or at rebuilding the temple, what will there be in the New Jerusalem! If the earth rent when the people rejoiced at Solomon's coronation, what a joyful shout will there be at the appearing of the King of the church! If, when the foundations of the earth were laid, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, what a joyful song will there be when the world of glory is both founded and finished; when the top-stone is laid, and when the holy city is adorned as the bride, the Lamb's wife!

SECT. VIII. Compare the joys thou shalt have in heaven, with what the saints have found in the way to it, and in the foretastes of it. When did God ever reveal the least of himself to any of his saints, but the joy of their heart was answerable to the revelation? In what an ecstasy was Peter on the mount of transfiguration! "Master," says he, "it is good for us to be here: let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." As if he said, "O let us not go down again to yonder perse cuting rabble; let us not return to our mean and suffering state. Is it not better to stay here, now we are here? Is not here better company and sweeter pleasure?" How was Paul lifted up with what he saw! How did the face of Moses shine when he had been talking with God? These were all extraordinary fortastes, but little to the full beatifical vision. How often have we read and heard of dying saints, who have been as full of joy as their hearts could hold, and when their bodies have felt the extremity of sickness and pain, have had so much of heaven in their spirits, that their joy hath far exceeded their sorrows? If a spark of this fire be so glorious, even amidst the sea of adversity, what then is glory itself? O the joy that the martyrs have felt in the flames! They were flesh and blood as well as we: it must therefore be some excellent thing that filled their spirits with joy while their bodies were burning Think, reader, in thy meditations, "Sure it must," some wonderful foretaste of glory that made the flames of fire easy, and the king of terrors welcome. what then is glory itself? What a blessed rest when the thoughts of it made Paul desire to depart and be with Christ, and makes the saints never thin themselves well till they are dead! Shall Saunde imbrace the stake, and cry, Welcome cross? Ar shall not I more delightfully embrace my blessedne and cry, Welcome crown? Shall Bradford kiss t faggot, and shall not I kiss the Saviour? another poor martyr rejoice to have her foot in same hole of the stocks in which Mr. Philpot's been before her? And shall not I rejoice that soul shall live in the same place of glory where Cl and his apostles are gone before me? Shall fire and his apostles are gone before me? faggot, prisons and banishment, cruel mocking scourgings, be more welcome to others than and glory to me? God forbid. SECT. IX. Compare the glory of the hea kingdom with the glory of the church on eart of Christ in his state of humiliation. If Chris fering in the room of sinners had such exce what is Christ at his Father's right hand? church under her sins and enemies have s beauty, what will she have at the marriage Lamb? How wonderful was the Son of Go form of a servant! When he is born, a must appear, and conduct the strangers to him in a manger; heavenly hosts with th must celebrate his nativity, while a child. dispute with doctors; when he enters upon he turns water into wine; feeds thousands loaves and fishes, cleanses the lepers, hea restores the lame, gives sight to the blind. the dead. How wonderful, then, is his cele

If there be such cutting down of boughs, ing of garments, and crying, Hosania, comes into Jerusalem riding on an a there be when he comes with his angel If they that heard him preach the go dom confess, "Never man spake lik then, that behold his majesty in ay, "There was never glory like this glory." when his enemies came to apprehend him. they fell o the ground; if, when he is dying, the earth quakes, he vail of the temple is rent, the sun is eclipsed, the lead bodies of the saints arise, and the standers by icknowledge, "Verily this was the Son of God;" O what a day will it be, when the dead must all arise, and stand before him; when he will once more shake, not the earth only, but the heavens also; when this sun shall be taken out of the firmament, and be everastingly darkened with his glory; and when every ongue shall confess him to be Lord and King! If, when he rose again, death and the grave lost their power; if angels must roll away the stone, terrify the keepers till they are as dead men, and send the tidings to his disciples; if he ascend to heaven in their sight: what power, dominion, and glory is he now possessed of, and which we must for ever possess with him. When he is gone, can a few poor fishermen and tent-makers eure the lame, blind, and sick, open prisons, destroy the disobedient, raise the dead, and astonish their idversaries? What a world will that be where every me can do greater works than these? If the preachng of the Gospel be accompanied with such power, as to discover the secrets of the heart, humble the proud sinner, and make the most obdurate tremble: f it can make men burn their books, sell their lands, bring in the price, and lay it down at the preacher's feet; if it can convert thousands, and turn the world apside down; if its doctrine, from the prisoner at the bar, can make the judge on the bench tremble; if Christ and his saints have this power and honour in the day of their abasement, and in the time appointed or their suffering and disgrace; what then will they have in their absolute dominion, and full advancenent in their kingdom of glory?

SECT. X. Compare the glorious change thou shall are at last, with the gracious change which the orith hath here wrought on thy heart. There is not a smallest sincere grace in thee, but is of greater than the riches of the Indies; not a hearty don'th than the riches of the Indies; not a hearty don'th than the riches of the Indies; not a hearty don't and groun after Christ, but is more to be value.

than the kingdom of the world. A rene is the very image of God; Christ dwelling the Spirit of God abiding in us; it is a bea face of God, the seed of God remaining only inherent beauty of the rational soul. man above all nobility; fits him to und Maker's pleasure, do his will, and receive If this grain of mustard seed be so precic the tree of life in the midst of the parad If a spark of life, which will but strive a ruptions, and flame out a few desires and of so much worth; how glorious, then, is t of this life! If we are said to be like Go are pressed down with a body of sin; su be much more like God, when we have no as sin within us. Is the desire after, a heaven so excellent; what then is the t Is our joy in foreseeing and believing so s will be the joy of full possession! How Christian when he feels his heart begins t be dissolved with the thoughts of sinful u Even this sorrow yields him joy. O whi it be, when we shall know, and love, a and praise in the highest perfection! thyself, "What a change was it, to be that state wherein I was born, and in w rivetted by custom, when thousands of si my score, and if I had so died. I had be for ever! What an astonishing change, fied from all these enormous crimes, and all these fearful plagues, and made an heir How often, when I have thought of my re have I cried out. O blessed day! and ble Lord that ever I saw it! How then sha in heaven, O blessed eternity! and bles Lord that brought me to it! Did the an rejoice to see my conversion? Surely th gratulate my felicity in my salvation. a spark raked up in the ashes, cover from the sight of the world, and som with corruption from my own sigh lasting glory will not be so clouded

under a bushel, but upon a hill, even upon mount Sion, the mount of God."

SECT. XI. Once more, compare the joys which thou shalt have above, with those foretastes of it which the Spirit hath given thee here. Hath not God sometimes revealed himself extraordinarily to thy soul, and let a drop of glory fall upon it? Hast thou not been ready to say, "O that it might be thus with my soul continually?" Didst thou never cry out with the martyr, after thy long and mournful expectations, "He is come, he is come?" Didst thou never, under a lively sermon of heaven, or in thy retired contemplations on that blessed state, perceive thy drooping spirits revive, and thy dejected heart lift up thy head, and the light of heaven dawn on thy soul? Think with thyself, "What is this earnest to the full inheritance! Alas, all this light that so amazeth and rejoiceth me, is but a candle lighted from heaven to lead me thither through this world of darkness. If some godly men have been overwhelmed with joy, till they have cried out, Hold, Lord, stay thy hand; I can bear no more! what then will be my joys in heaven, when my soul shall be so capable of seeing and enjoying God, that though the light be ten thousand times greater than the sun, yet my eyes shall be able for ever to behold it!" Or if thou hast not yet felt these sweet foretastes, (for every believer hath not felt them), then make use of such delights as thou hast felt, in order the better to discern what thou shalt hereafter feel.

SECT. XIII. (II.) I am now to show how heavenly contemplation may be preserved from a wandering heart. Our chief work is here to discover the danger, and that will direct to the fittest remedy. The heart will prove the greatest hinderance in this heavenly employment; either, by backwardness to it; or, by trifling in it; or, by frequent excursions to other objects; or, by abruptly ending the work before it is well begun. As you value the comfort of this works well begun. As you value the comfort of this works these dangerous evils must be faithfully resisted.

SECT. XIII. 1. Thou wilt find thy heart as back ward to this. I think, as to any work in the

whether it be a duty or whether to thyself. It will tell thee, for ministers that have nothing else persons that have more leisure than thou be a minister, it will tell thee duty of the people; it is enough for t for their instruction, and let them me they have heard." As if it was th cook their meat, and serve it up, and eat it, digest it, and live upon it. If do, thy heart will tell thee of other thee upon some other duty, for it h any duty than this. Perhaps it will t duties are greater, and therefore this to them, because thou hast no time f business is more important; to stud the saving of souls must be prefer private contemplations." As if the to care for thy own salvation, for l of others. Or thy charity to othe that it obliges thee to neglect thy fare. Or as if there were any bett be useful to others, than making distring ourselves. Certainly he

ou do it, if I tell thee? Wouldst thou not say in like case, "What should I do with a servant that ill not work? or with a horse that will not travel? nall I keep them to look at?" Then faithfully deal us with thy heart: persuade it to the work, take denial, chide it for its backwardness, use violence ith it. Hast thou no command of thy own thoughts? not the subject of thy meditations a matter of oice, especially under this conduct of thy judg-ent? Surely God gave thee, with thy new nature, me power to govern thy thoughts. Art thou again come a slave to thy depraved nature? Resume y authority. Call in the Spirit of Christ to thine sistance, who is never backward to so good a work, r will deny his help in so just a cause. Say to m, "Lord, thou gavest my reason the command of y thoughts and affections; the authority I have reived over them is from thee; and now, behold, ey refuse to obey thine authority. Thou comindest me to set them to the work of heavenly editation, but they rebel, and stubbornly refuse the ty. Wilt thou not assist me to exercise that auority which thou hast given me? O send down y Spirit, that I may enforce thy commands, and ectually compel them to obey thy will!" Thus ou shalt see thy heart will submit, its resistance be ercome, and its backwardness be turned into cheercompliance. SECT. XV. 2. Thy heart will also be likely to

ray thee by trifling, when it should be effectually ditating. Perhaps, when thou hast an hour for ditation, the time will be spent before thy heart I be serious. This doing of duty, as if we did it, ruins as many as the omission of it. Here let ne eye be always upon thy heart. Look not so ch to the time it spends in the duty, as to the intity and quality of the work that is done. You tell by this work whether a servant hash been tent. Ask yourself, "What affections have yet exercised? How much am I yet got nearer to exercised? How much am I yet got nearer m?" Think not, since thy heart is so trifling the effect to let it alone: for by this means thou will effect to let it alone:

certainly banish all spiritual obedience; because best hearts, being but sanctified in part, will resso far as they are carnal. But rather consider with corruption of thy nature; and that its sinful in positions will not supersede the commands of Gnor one sin excuse for another; and that God appointed means to excite our affections. This s reasoning, self-considering duty of heavenly med tion is the most singular means both to excite and crease love. Therefore stay not from the duty till tifeelest thy love constrain thee, any more than the wouldst stay from the fire till thou feelest thy warm; but engage in the work till love is excit and then love will constrain thee to further duty.

Sect. XVI. 3. Thy heart will also be mak excursions from thy heavenly meditations to

wouldst stay from the fire till thou feelest thy warm; but engage in the work till love is excit and then love will constrain thee to further duty. SECT. XVI. 3. Thy heart will also be mak excursions from thy heavenly meditations to ot objects. It will be turning aside like a careless vant, to talk with every one that passeth by. Wi there should be nothing in thy mind but heaven will be thinking of thy calling, or thy affections, of every bird, or tree, or place thou seest. The c is here the same as before; use watchfulness and lence. Say to thy heart, "What, did I come hit to think of my worldly business, or of persons, place news, or vanity, or of any thing but heaven, be ever so good? Canst thou not watch one hou Wouldst thou leave this world, and dwell for e with Christ in heaven, and not leave it one hour dwell with Christ in meditation? Is this thy love thy friend? Dost thou love Christ, and the place thy eternal blessed abode no more than this?" If ravening fowls of wandering thoughts devour the ditations intended for heaven, they devour the life: joy of thy thoughts; therefore drive them away fi thy sacrifice, and strictly keep thy heart to the wo SECT. XVII. 4. Abruptly ending thy meditat

before it is well begun, is another way in which heart will deceive thee. Thou mayet easily perthis in other duties. In secret prayer, is not heart urging thee to cut it short, and frequent ing a motion to have done? So in heavenly plation thy heart will be weary of the work



stop thy heavenly walk before thou art well warm. But charge it in the name of God to stay, and not do so great a work by halves. Say to it, "Foolish heart! if thou beg awhile, and goest away before thou hast thy alms, is not thy begging a lost labour? If thou stoppest before the end of thy journey, is not thy travel lost? Thou camest hither in hope to have a sight of the glory which thou must inherit; and wilt thou stop when thou art almost at the top of the hill, and turn back before thou hast taken thy survey? Thou camest hither in hope to speak with God, and wilt thou go before thou hast seen him? Thou camest to bathe thyself in the streams of consolation, and to that end didst thou unclothe thyself of thy early thoughts; and wilt thou only touch the bank, and return? Thou camest to spy out the land of promise; go not back without one cluster of grapes, to show thy brethren for their encouragement. Let them see that thou hast tasted of the wine, by the gladness of thy heart; and that thou hast been anointed with the oil, by the cheerfulness of thy countenance; and hast fed of the milk and honey, by the mildness of thy disposition, and the sweetness of thy conversation. This heavenly fire would melt thy frozen heart, and refine and spiritualize it; but it must have time to operate." Thus pursue the work till something be done, till thy graces be in exercise, thy affections raised, and thy soul refreshed with the delights above; or if thou canst not attain these ends at once, be the more earnest at another time. Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

CHAPTER XVI.

HEAVENLY CONTEMPLATION EXEMPLIFIED, AND THE WHOLE WORK CONCLUDED.

bor. I. The reader's attention excited to the following example meditation. Shor. II. The excellences of heavenly rest; Sect. V. Its nearnes; Sect. V. And to saints; Sect. V. And to saints; Sect. VI. Its dear purchase; Sect. VII. Its dear purchase; Sect. VII. Its dear purchase; Sect. VIII. The heart pleaded with Sect. IX.

lief banished. SET. X. A careless world pitied. SECT. XI. Heavenly rest the object of love, SET. XIV.—XXI. And Joy. XXII. The hearty isockwardness to heavenly joy lamented. XXIII.—XXVII. Henvenly rest the object of desire. SECT. XXI Such meditation as this urged upon the reader: SECT. XXIX mischief of neglecting it: SECT. XXX. The happiness of pursu SECT. XXXII. The author's concluding prayer for the success work.

SECT. I. And now, reader, according to the a directions, make conscience of daily exercising graces in meditation, as well as prayer. Retire some secret place, at a time the most convenier thyself, and, laying aside all worldly thoughts, all possible seriousness and reverence look up to heaven, remember there is thine everlasting study its excellency and reality, and rise from to faith by comparing heavenly with earthly Then mix ejaculations with the soliloquies; till, ing pleaded thy case reverently with God, and ously with thy own heart, thou hast pleaded the from a clod to a flame; from a forgetful sinner, a lover of the world, to an ardent lover of God; fro fearful coward to a resolved Christian; from an fruitful sadness to a joyful life: in a word, till hast pleaded thy heart from earth to heaven, i conversing below to walking with God, and till t canst lay thy heart to rest, as in the bosom of Ch by some such meditation of thy everlasting rest is here added for thy assistance.

SECT. II. "Rest! How sweet the sound! melody to my ears! It lies as a reviving cordia my heart, and from thence sends forth lively spi which beat through all the pulses of my soul! Inot as the stone that rests on the earth, nor as flesh shall rest in the grave, nor such a rest as carnal world desires. O blessed rest! when we not day and night saying, Holy, holy, holy, I God Almighty! When we shall rest from sin, not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but have just the bosom of my will. When I shall rest in the bosom of my will.



HEAVENLY MEDITATION.

kod, who is love itself, shall perfectly k est in his love to me, as I shall rest i o him; and rejoice over me with joy, an ne with singing, as I shall rejoice in him.

SECT. III. "How near is that most bles. lay! It comes apace. He that shall come, and will not tarry. Though my Lord seem is coming, yet a little while and he will What is a few hundred years, when they a How surely will his sign appear. How a vill he seize upon the careless world, even ightning cometh out of the east and shineth vest! He who is gone hence shall so come. M [hear his trumpet sound! Methinks I see hi ng in clouds, with his attending angels, in n

ind in glory.

"O secure sinners! What no SECT. IV. ou do? where will you hide yourselves? what over you? Mountains are gone; the heaven e earth which were, are passed away; the de g fire hath consumed all, except yourselves, 1st be the fuel for ever. O that you could cons soon as the earth, and melt away as did the h I Ah, these wishes are now but vain! nb himself would have been your friend; he w e loved you, and ruled you, and now have s ; but you would not then, and now it is too er cry, 'Lord, Lord,' too late, too late 1 dost thou look about! Can any save t ther dost thou run? Can any hide thee? h, that has brought thyself to this!

T. V. "Now, blessed saints, that have belibeyed! This is the end of faith and patie 3 it for which you prayed and waited. Do epent your sufferings and sorows, your g and holy walking? Are your tears of e now bitter or sweet? See how the pon you; there is love in his looks; th mer, Husband, Head, are written hining face. Hark, he calls you here on his right hand; fear not

sheep. O joyful sentence,

AN EXAMPLE OF

ather, inherit the kingdom prepared a foundation of the world!' He takes I, the door is open, the kingdom is his, ours; there is your place before his her receives you as the spouse of his ou welcome to the crown of glory. hy, you must be crowned. This was ree redeeming grace, the purpose of) blessed grace! O blessed love! O y will rise! But I cannot express it, ve it. This is that joy which was procured

crown which was procured by the d wept, that now my tears might be bled, that I might now rejoice; he at I might now be forsook: he then it now live. O free mercy, that can retch! Free to me, though dear to ce that hath chosen me, when thouaken! When my companions in sin Il, I must here rejoice in rest! Here h all these saints! O comfortable ld acquaintance, with whom I prayed, affered, and spoke often of this day e the grave could not detain you; the

This is not like our cottages of clay, earthly dwellings. This voice of joy ld complaints, our impatient groans his melodious praise like the scoffs and oaths and curses, which we heard on y is not like that we had, nor this soul had, nor this life like the life we lived. al our place and state, our clothes and oks, language, and company. Befor k and despised; but now how have hing is a saint! Where is now high wearied themselves

redeemed and saved you also.

e, and glory. O sweet reconciliation! Happy n! Now the Gospel shall no more be dishonoured igh our folly. No more, my soul, shalt thou lament ufferings of the saints or the church's ruins, nor rn thy suffering friends, nor weep over their dying , or their graves. Thou shalt never suffer thy emptations from Satan, the world, or thy own Thy pains and sickness are all cured; thy shall no more burden thee with weakness and iness; thy aching head and heart, thy hunger thirst, thy sleep and labour, are all gone. a mighty change is this! From the dunghill e throne: from persecuting sinners, to praising s: from a vile body, to this which shines as the itness of the firmament: from a sense of God's easure, to the perfect enjoyment of him in love: all my doubts and fears, to this possession, h puts me out of doubt: from all my fearful ghts of death, to this joyful life. Blessed change! well sin and sorrow for ever; farewell my rocky, d, unbelieving heart; my worldly, sensual, careart; and welcome now my most holy, heavenly Farewell repentance, faith, and hope; and ome love, and joy, and praise. I shall now have narvest, without ploughing or sowing; my joy out a preacher, or a promise; even all from the Whatever mixture is in the of God himself. ms, there is nothing but pure joy in the fountain. shall I be encircled with eternity, and ever live ever, ever, praise the Lord. My face will not kle, nor my hair be gray; 'for this corruptible have put on incorruption, and this mortal, imality, and death shall be swallowed up in vic-O death, where is now thy sting? O grave, e is thy victory?' The date of my lease will no

e is thy victory? The date of my lease will no expire, nor shall I trouble myself with thoughts ath, nor lose my joys through fear of losing them. I millions of ages are passed, my glory is but he ig: and when millions more are passed; it is user ending. Every day is all noon, every sign is harvest, every year is a jubileo, every sign is harvest, every year is a jubileo, every sign is harvest, and all this is one eternity.

eternity! the glory of my glory! the perfection o

perfection! SECT. VIII. "Ah, drowsy, earthly heart! coldly dost thou think of this reviving day! H thou rather sit down in dirt, than walk in the pala God? Art thou now remembering thy worldly ness, or thinking of thy lusts, earthly delights, merry company? Is it better to be here, than a with God? Is the company better; are the pleas greater? Come away; make no excuse, nor de God commands, and I command thee; gird up loins; ascend the mount; look about thee with and seriousness. Look not back upon the way o wilderness, except it be to compare the kingdom that howling desert, more sensibly to perceive wide difference. Yonder is thy Father's glory; der, O my soul, must thou remove, when thou partest from this body; and when the power of Lord hath raised it again, and joined thee to it, der must thou live with God for ever. There is glorious New Jerusalem, the gates of pearl, the fe dation of pearl, the streets and pavements of tran rent gold. That sun, which lighteth all this world, be useless there; even thyself shall be as bright as der shining sun. God will be the sun, and Christ

light, and in his light shalt thou have light.

SECT. IX. "O my soul, dost thou 'stagger at promise of God, through unbelief?" I much sus thee. Didst thou believe indeed, thou woulds more affected with it. Is it not under the hand, seal, and oath of God? Can God lie? Can 'he is truth itself be false? What need hath Go flatter or deceive thee? Why should he promise more than he will perform? Dare not to charge wise, almighty, faithful God, with this. How in of the promises have been performed to thee in conversion? Would God so powerfully concur, a feigned word? O wretched heart of und Hath God made thee a promise of rest, and will the come short of it. Thine eyes, thine ears, where of God can delude thee. Those is mise of God can delude thee.

hands. Art thou sure thou art alive, or that this is

earth thou standest on, or that thine eyes see the sun? As sure is all this glory to the saints; as sure shall I be higher than yonder stars, and live for ever in the holy city, and joyfully sound forth the praises of my Redeemer; if I be not shut out by this 'evil heart of unbelief,' causing me to 'depart from the living God.' SECT. X. "And is this rest so sweet and so sure? Then what means the careless world? Know they

what they neglect? Did they ever hear of it, or are they yet asleep, or are they dead? Do they certainly know that the crown is before them, while they thus sit still or follow trifles? Undoubtedly they are beside themselves, to mind so much their provision by the way, when they are hasting so fast to another world, and their eternal happiness lies at stake. Were there left one spark of reason, they would never sell their rest for toil, nor their glory for worldly vanities, nor venture heaven for sinful pleasure. Poor men! O that you would once consider what you hazard, and then you would scorn these tempting baits! Blessed for ever be that love which hath rescued me from this bewitching darkness! SECT. XI. "Draw yet nearer, O my soul! with thy most fervent love. Here is matter for it to work upon, something worth thy loving. O see what beauty presents itself! Is not all the beauty in the world united here? Is not all other beauty but deformity? Dost thou now need to be persuaded to love! Here is a feast for thine eyes, and all the powers of thy soul: dost thou need entreaties to feed upon it! Caust thou love a little shining earth, a

thou see it with thine eyes, or feel it with thine

sorrer of that which is written in the word, than if

thee than heaven? Does this world ag desires? Hast thou not had a sufficien Or dost thou love for interest and ne Where hast thou better interest than in nearer relation than there?

Secr. XII. "Dost thou love for and familiarity? Though thine eyes seen thy Lord, yet thou hast heard he ceived his benefits, and lived in his taught thee to know thyself and him thee that first window through which into heaven. Hast thou forgotten sing was careless, and he awakened it: he softened it; stubborn, and he made it yie and he troubled it; whole, and he in broken till he healed it again? Hast the times when he found thee in tears; thy secret sighs and groans, and left comfort thee? when he took thee, arms, and asked thee, 'Poor soul.

thou weep, when I have went so much? Be of cheer; thy wounds are saving, and not deadly; have made them, who mean thee no hurt: h I let out thy blood, I will not let out thy life.' ember his voice. How gently did he take me low carefully did he dress my wounds: methinks r him still saying to me, 'Poor sinner, though hast dealt unkindly with me, and cast me of; will not do so by thee. Though thou hast set by me and all my mercies; yet they and myre all thine. What wouldst thou have that I give thee? And what dost thou want that I ot give thee? If any thing I have will give pleasure, thou shalt have it. Wouldst thou pardon? I freely forgive thee all the debt. dst thou have grace and peace? Thou shalt them both. Wouldst thou have myself? Be-[am thine, thy Friend, thy Lord, thy Brother and, and Head. Wouldst thou have the Fa-

I will bring thee to him, and thou shalt have in and by me.' These were my Lord's restving 3. After all, when I was doubtful of his love. nks I yet remember his overcoming arguments. e I done so much, sinner, to testify my love, et dost thou doubt? Have I offered thee mynd love so long, and yet dost thou question my gness to be thine? At what dearer rate should thee that I love thee? Wilt thou not believe itter passion proceeded from love? Have I myself in the Gospel a lion to thine enemies, I lamb to thee; and dost thou overlook my like nature? Had I been willing to let thee i, what need have I done and suffered so much? need I follow thee with such patience and imnity? . Why dost thou tell me of thy wants? I not enough for me and thee? Or of thy uniness? for if thou wast thyself worthy what let thou do with my worthiness? Did I ever as such upon earth? Hast thou nothing; as

st and miserable, helpless and forlorn? Blieve I am an all-sufficient Baviour;

har

wouldst thou have me? Lo. I am thine, take me; if thou art willing, I am; and neither sin, nor Satan, shall break the match.' These, O these, were the blessed words which his Spirit from his Gospel spoke unto me, till he made me cast myself at his feet, and cry out, 'My Saviour and my Lord, thou hast broke, thou hast revived my heart; thou hast overcome, thou hast won my heart; take it, it is thine; if such a heart can please thee, take it; if it cannot, make it such as thou wouldst have it.' Thus, O my soul, mayest thou remember the sweet familiarity thou hast had with Christ; therefore, if acquaintance will cause affection, let out thy heart unto him. It is he that hath stood by thy bed of sickness, hath eased thy pains, refreshed thy weariness, and removed thy fears. He hath been always ready, when thou hast earnestly sought him; hath met thee in public and private; hath been found of thee in the congregation, in thy house, in thy closet, in the field, in thy waking nights, in thy deepest dangers.

SECT. XIII. "If bounty and compassion be an attractive of love, how unmeasurably then am I bound to love him! All the mercies that have filled up my life, all the places that ever I abode in, all the societies and persons I have been conversant with, all my employments and relations, every condition I have been in, and every change I have passed through, all tell me that the fountain is overflowing goodness. Lord, what a sum of love am I indebted to thee! And how does my debt continually increase! How should I love again for so much love? But shall I dare to think of requiting thee, or of recompensing all thy love with mine? Will my mite requite thee for thy golden mines; my seldom wishes for thy constant bounty; mine, which is nothing, or not mine, for thine which is infinite and thine own? Shall I dare to contend in love with thee, or set m borrowed, languid spark against the sum of low Can I love as high, as deep, as broad, as long, Love itself? as much as he that made me, and the made me love, and gave me all that little which made me love, and gave me all that little which match thee in the work

power, nor make, nor preserve, nor rule the worlds; no more can I match thee in love. No, Lord, I yield, I am overcome. O blessed conquest! Go on victoriously, and still prevail, and triumph in thy love. The captive of love shall proclaim thy victory; when thou leadest me in triumph from earth to heaven, from death to life, from the tribunal to the throne; myself, and all that see it, shall acknowledge thou hast prevailed, and all shall say, 'Behold how he loved him!' Yet let me love in subjection to thy love; as thy redeemed captive, though not thy peer. Shall I not love at all, because I cannot reach thy measure? O that I could feelingly say, 'I love thee, even as I love my friend and myself!' Though I cannot say, as the apostle, 'Thou knowest that I love thee;' yet I can say, 'Lord, thou knowest that I would love thee. I am angry with my heart that it doth not love thee; I chide it, yet it doth not mend; I reason with it, and would fain persuade it, yet I do not perceive it stir: I rub and chafe it in the use of ordinances, and yet I feel it not warm within me. Unworthy soul! Is not thine eye now upon the only lovely object? art thou not now beholding the ravishing glory of the saints? And dost thou not love? Art thou not a rational soul, and should not reason tell thee that earth is a dungeon to the celestial glory? Art thou not thyself a spirit, and shouldst thou not love God, 'who is a spirit, and the Father of spirits?' Why dost thou love so much thy perishing clay, and love no more the heavenly glory? Shalt thou love when thou comest there? When the Lord shall take thy carcass from the grave, and make thee shine as the sun in glory for ever and ever; shalt thou then love, or shalt thou not? Is not the place a meeting of lovers? Is not the life a state of love? Is it not the great marriage day of the Lamb? Is not the employment there the work of love, where the souls with Christ take their fill? O then, my soul, begin it here! Be sick with love now, that thou mayest be well with love there. Keep those now in the love of God, and let neither life, and let the property of the soul of the s death, nor any thing, separate thee from it; and shalt be kept in the fulness of love for ever, and nething shall imbitter or abate thy pleasure: for the Lord hath prepared a city of love, a place for communicating love to his chosen, 'and they that love his name shall dwell therein.'

SECT. XIV. "Awake, then, O my drowsy soul To sleep under the light of grace is unreasonable, much more in the approach of the light of glory. Come forth, my dull, congealed spirit; thy Lord bids thee 'rejoice, and again rejoice.' Thou hast lain long enough in thy prison of flesh, where Satan hath been thy jailor; cares have been thy irons, fears thy scourges, and thy food the bread and water of affliction; where sorrows have been thy lodging, and thy sins and foes have made thy bed, and an unbelieving heart hath been the gates and bars that have kept thee in: the angel of the covenant now calls thee, and bids thee arise and follow him. Up, O my soul! and cheerfully obey, and thy bolts and bars shall all fly open; follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, Shouldst thou fear to follow such a guide? Can the sun lead thee to a state of darkness? Will he lead thee to death, who died to save thee from it? Follow him, and he will show thee the paradise of God; he will give thee a sight of the New Jerusalem, and a taste of the tree of life. Come forth, my drooping soul, and lay aside thy winter dress; let it be seen, by thy garments of joy and praise, that the spring is come: and as thou now seest thy comforts green, thou shalt shortly see them 'white and ripe for harvest,' and then thou shalt be called to reap, and gather, and take possession. Should I suspend and delay my joys till then? Should not the joys of the spring go before the joys of harvest? Is title nothing before possession? Is the heir in no better a state than a slave? My Lord hath taught me to rejoice in hope of his glory; and how to see it through the bars of a prison: for when persecuted for righteous ness' sake. he commands me to 'rejoice, and be ex ---- roward in heaven is kree trite,' he yet more delights in the soul that 'delights in him.' Hath my Lord spread me a table in this wilderness, and furnished it with the promises of everlasting glory, and set before me angel's food? Doth he frequently and importunately invite me to sit down, and feed, and spare not? Hath he, to that end, furnished me with reason, and faith, and a joyful disposition? And is it possible that he should be unwilling to have me rejoice? Is it not his command to 'delight thyself in the Lord;' and his promise to 'give thee the desires of thine heart?' Art thou not charged to 'rejoice evermore?' yea, to 'sing aloud, and shout for joy?' Why should I then be discouraged? My God is willing, if I were but willing. He is delighted with my delights. He would have it my constant frame and daily business to be near him in my believing meditations, and to live in the sweetest thoughts of his goodness. O blessed employment, fit for the sons of God! But thy feast, my Lord, is nothing to me without an appetite! Thou hast set the dainties of heaven before me; but, alas! I am blind, and cannot see them; I am sick, and cannot relish them; I am so benumbed that I cannot put forth my hand to take them. I therefore humbly beg this grace, that as thou hast opened heaven to me in thy word, so thou wouldst open mine eyes to see it, and my heart to delight in it, else heaven will be no heaven to me. O thou Spirit of life, breathe upon thy graces in me; take me by the hand, and lift me from the earth, that I may see what glory thou hast prepared for them that love thee.

SECT. XV. "Away, then, ye soul-tormenting cares and fears, ye heart-vexing sorrows. At least forbear a little while; stand by; stay here below, till I go up, and see my rest. The way is strange to me, but not to Christ. There was the eternal abode of his glorious Deity; and thither hath he also broughthis glorified flesh. It was his work to purchase it it is his to prepare it, and to prepare me for it, as bring me to it. The eternal God of truth hath given me his promise, his seal and oath, that believin Christ, I shall not perish, but have everlasting

Thither shall my soul be speedily removed, and my body very shortly follow. And can my tongte asy that I shall shortly and surely live with God; and yet my heart not leap within me? Can I say it with faith, and not with joy? Ah! faith, how sensibly do I now perceive thy weakness! But though unbelief darken my light, and dull my life, and suppress my joys, it shall not be able to conquer and destroy me though it envy all my comforts, yet some in spite of it I shall even here receive; and if that did not hinder, what abundance might I have. The light of heaven would shine into my heart, and I might be almost as familiar there as I am on earth. away then, my soul; stop thine ears to the ignorant language of infidelity; thou art able to answer all its arguments; or, if thou art not, yet tread them under thy feet. Come away; stand not looking on that grave, nor turning those bones, nor reading thy lesson now in the dust; those lines will soon be wiped out. But lift up thy head, and look to heaven, and see thy name written 'in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain.' What if an angel should tell thee, that there is a mansion in heaven prepared for thee, that it shall certainly be thine for ever; would not such a message make thee glad? And dost thou make light of the infallible word of promise, which was delivered by the Spirit, and even by the Son himself. Suppose thou hadst seen a fiery chariot come for thee, and fetch thee up to heaven, like Elijah, would not this rejoice thee? but thy Lord assures thee, that the soul of Lazarus hath a convoy of angels to carry it into Abraham's bosom. Shall a drunkard be so merry among his cups, or the glutton in his delicious fare; and shall not I rejoice, who must shortly be in heaven? Can meat and drink delight me when I hunger and thirst? Can I find pleasure in walks, and gardens, and convenient dweilings? Can beautiful objects delight mine eyes; or grateful odours my smell; or melody my ears' And shall not the forethought of celestial by delight me? Methinks among my books I con employ myself in sweet content, and bid the w

farewell, and pity the rich and great that know not this happiness; what then will my happiness in heaven be, where my knowledge will be perfect? If the queen of Sheba came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see his glory; how cheerfully should I pass from earth to heaven, to see the glory of the eternal Majesty, and attain the height of wisdom, compared with which the most learned on earth are but fools and idiots! What if God had made me commander of the earth: what if I could remove mountains, heal diseases with a word or a touch, or cast out devils; should I not rejoice in such privileges and honours as these? And shall I not much more rejoice that my name is written in heaven? I cannot here enjoy my parents, or my near beloved friends, without some delight: especially when I did freely let out my affection to my friend, how sweet was that exercise of my love! O what will it then be to live in the perpetual love of God? 'For brethren to dwell together in unity here, how good and how pleasant it is!' To see a family live in love, husband and wife, parents, children, and servants, doing all in love to one another; to see a town live together in love, without any envyings, brawlings, or contentions, law-suits, factions, or divisions, but every man loving his neighbour as himself, thinking they can never do too much for one another, but striving to go beyond each other in love; how happy, how delightful a sight is this! O then, what a blessed society will the family of heaven be, and those peaceful inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, where there is no division nor differing judgments, no disaffection nor strangeness, no deceitful friendship, no, not one unkind expression, not an angry look or thought; but all are one in Christ, who is one with the Father, and all live in the love of him, who is love itself? The soul is not more where it lives than where it loves. How near, then, will my soul be united to God, when I shall so heartily, strongly and incessantly love him! Ah, wretched, unbelied ing heart, that can think of such a day and work, life as this, with such low and feeble joys! But my future enjoyments will be more lively.

SECT. XVI. "How delightful is it to me to behold and study these inferior works of creation! What a beautiful fabric do we here dwell in: the floor so dressed with herbs, and flowers, and trees, and watered with springs and rivers: the roof so widely expanded, so admirably adorned! What wonders do sun, moon, and stars, seas, and winds, contain! And hath God prepared such a house for corruptible flesh. for a soul imprisoned? and doth he bestow so many millions of wonders upon his enemies? O what a dwelling must that be which he prepares for his dearly beloved children; and how will the glory of the New Jerusalem exceed all the present glory of the creatures! Arise, then, O my soul, in thy contemplation; and let thy thoughts of that glory as far exceed in sweetness thy thoughts of the excellencies below. Fear not to go out of this body and this world, when thou must make so happy a change; but say, as one did when he was dying, 'I am glad, and even leap for joy, that the time is come in which that mighty Jehovah, whose majesty in my search of nature I have admired, whose goodness I have adored, whom by faith I have desired and panted after, will now show himself to me face to face.'

SECT. XVII. "How wonderful also are the works of Providence! How delightful to see the great God interest himself in the safety and advancement of a few humble, praying, but despised persons; and to review those special mercies with which my own life hath been adorned and sweetened! How often have my prayers been heard, my tears regarded, my roubled soul relieved! How often hath my Lord sid me be of good cheer! What a support are these experiences, these clear testimonies of my Father's love, to my fearful unbelieving heart! Othen what a blessed day will that be, when I shall have all how of mercy, perfection of mercy, and fully enjoy the Lord of mercy; when I shall stand on the shore and look back on the raging seas I have safely passed; when

I shall review my pains and sorrows, my fears and tears, and possess the glory which was the end of all! If one drop of lively faith was mixed with these considerations, what a heavenly ravishing heart should I carry within me! Fain would 'I believe; Lord, help my unbelief.'

SECT. XVIII. "How sweet, O my soul, have ordinances been to thee! What delight hast thou had in prayer, and thanksgiving, under heavenly sermons, and in the society of saints, and to see 'the Lord adding to the Church such as should be saved!' How then can my heart conceive the joy, which I shall have to see the perfected church in heaven, and to be admitted into the celestial temple, and with the heavenly host praise the Lord for ever? If the word of God was sweeter to Job than his necessary food: and to David, than honey, and the honey-comb; and was the joy and rejoicing of Jeremiah's heart; how blessed a day will that be, when we shall fully enjoy the Lord of this word, and shall no more need these written precepts and promises, nor read any book but the face of the glorious God! If they that heard Christ speak on earth were astonished at his wisdom and answers, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; how shall I then be affected to behold him in his majesty!

SECT. XIX. "Can the prospect of this glory make others welcome the cross, and even refuse deliverance; and cannot it make thee cheerful under lesser sufferings? Can it sweeten the flames of martyrdom; and not sweeten thy life, or thy sickness, or thy natural death? Is it not the same heaven which they and I must live in? Is not their God, their Christ, their crown, and mine, the same? And shall I look upon it with an eye so dim, a heart so dull, a countenance so dejected? Some small foretastes of it have I myself had; and how much more delivented have they been, than any earthly things ever were and what, then, will the full enjoyment be.

SECT. XX. "What a beauty is there here in the imperfect graces of the Spirit! Alas, how small arthese to what we shall enjoy in our perfect state.

What a happy life should I here live, could God as much as I would; could I be all always loving! O my soul! what woulds for such a life? Had I such apprehensio such knowledge of his word as I desire; outrust him in all my straits; could I he as would in every duty; could I make God m desire and delight; I would not envy the a honours or pleasures. What a blessed soul! wilt thou shortly be in, when thou far more of these than thou caust now desire exercise thy perfected graces in the immed of God, and not in the dark, and at a distar

SECT. XXI. "Is the sinning, afflicted, Church of Christ so much more excellen particular gracious soul? What then will be, when it is fully gathered and glorified is ascended from the valley of tears to me when it shall sin and suffer no more! The old Jerusalem will be darkness and de the glory of the new. What cause shall then to shout for joy, when we shall see he the heavenly temple is, and remember the

of the church on earth.

SECT. XXII. "But, alas! what a loss the midst of my contemplation! I though had all the while attended, but I see it What life is there in empty thoughts a without affections? Neither God nor I fir a them. Where hast thou been, unworthile I was opening to thee the everlasures? Art thou not ashamed to complai of an uncomfortable life, and to murmur filling thee with sorrows; when he in vain the delights of angels? Hadst thou now be me close, it would have made thee revive for joy, and forget thy pams and sorrow think my heart had been so backward to Sect. XXIII. "Lord, thou hast respectively and the second sorrow that we have the second sorrow that we had the second sorrow that we had been so backward to second sorrow that we had been so so backward to second sorrow that we had been so so backw

fect joys for heaven, therefore help with I may possess, and let me long, who would, rejoice. O my sor

ow, that thou art not yet at thy rest. When I arrive at that safe and quiet harbour where e are none of these storms, waves, and dangers, n I shall never more have a weary restless night sy? Then my life will not be such a mixture of and fear, of joy and sorrow; nor shall flesh and t be combating within me; nor faith and unif, humility and pride, maintain a continual con-O when shall I be past these soul-tormenting and cares, and griefs? When shall I be out of soul-contradicting, insnaring, deceitful flesh; corruptible body, this vain, vexatious world? , that I must stand and see the church and cause hrist tossed about in contention, and made subient to private interests, or deluded fancies! is none of this disorder in the heavenly Jerun; there I shall find a harmonious concert of cted spirits obeying and praising their everlast-King. O how much better to be a door-keeper than the commander of this tumultuous world! r am I no more weary of this weariness? so forget my resting-place? Up then, O my in thy most raised and fervent desires? Stay till this flesh can desire with thee; expect not sense should apprehend thy blessed object, and hee when and what to desire. Doth not the dulof thy desires after rest accuse thee of most deble ingratitude and folly? Must thy Lord prothee a rest at so dear a rate, and dost thou no value it? Must he go before to prepare so ous a mansion for such a wretch, and art thou to go and possess it? Shall the Lord of glory sirous of thy company, and thou not desirous of Must earth become a very hell to thee, before art willing to be with God? Behold the most y creature, or the most desirable state, and tell me, e wouldst thou be, if not with God? Poverty is den; riches a snare; sickness unpleasing; health ; the frowning world bruises thy heel; the world stings thee to the heart; so much as rld is loved and delighted in, it hurts and o the lover; and if it may not be loved, w

are gracious, and are they not also sinful? The kin!; and are they not soon displeased? The humble, but, alas! how proud also! Their grasweet, and their gifts helpful; but are not the ruptions bitter, and their imperfections hurtful art thou so loath to go from them to thy God!

SECT. XXIV. "O my soul, look upon this of sorrows! Hast thou so long felt the smarti of affliction, and no better understood its me Is not every stroke to drive thee hence? Is voice like that of Elijah, 'What dost thou Dost thou forget thy Lord's prediction, 'I world ye shall have tribulation; in me ye ma peace?' Ah! my dear Lord, I feel thy mean is written in my flesh, engraved in my bones heart thou aimest at; thy rod drives; thy chord of love draws; and all to bring it to t



attaining my desires increase my weariness, and that makes me groan to be at rest.

SECT. XXV. "Indeed, Lord, my soul itself is in a strait, and what to choose I know not; but thou knowest what to give. 'To depart, and be with thee, is far better.' But 'to abide in the flesh, seems needful.' Thou knowest I am not weary of thy work, but of sorrow and sin; I am willing to stay while thou wilt employ me, and despatch the work thou hast put into my hands; but, I beseech thee, stay no longer when this is done; and while I must be here, let me be still amending and ascending; make me still better, and take me at the best. I dare not be so impatient as to importune thee to cut off my time, and snatch me hence unready; because I know my everlasting state so much depends on the improvement of this life. Nor would I stay when my work is done; and remain here sinning while my brethren are triumphing. Thy footsteps bruise this worm, while those stars shine in the firmament of glory. Yet I am thy child as well as they; Christ is my head as well as theirs: why is there then so great a distance? But I acknowledge the equity of thy ways: though we are all children, yet I am the prodigal, and therefore more fit in this remote country to feed on husks, while they are always with thee, and possess thy glory. They were once themselves in my condition, and I shall shortly be in They were of the lowest form, before they came to the highest; they suffered before they reigned; they came out of great tribulation, who are now before thy throne; and shall not I be content to some to the crown as they did; and to drink of their sup before I sit with them in the kingdom? Lord, I am content to stay thy time, and go thy way, so thou wilt exalt me also in thy season, and take me. nto thy barn when thou seest me ripe. In the mean ime I may desire, though I am not to repine; I may dieve and wish, though not make any sinful haste. um willing to wait for thee, but not to lose the I when thou seest me too contented with thine 26, then quicken my languid desires, and blow

the dying spark of love: and leave me not till I am able unfeignedly to cry out, 'As the heart panieth after the water brooks, so panieth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God. My conversation is in heaven, from whence I look for a Saviour. My affections are set on things above, where Christ sitteth, and my life is hid. I walk by faith, and not by sight; willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.'

from the body, and present with the Lord.' SECT. XXVI. "What interest hath this empty world in me? and what is there in it that may seem so lovely as to entice my desires from my God, or make me loath to come away? Methinks, when I look upon it with a deliberate eye, it is a howling wilderness, and too many of its inhabitants are untamed monsters. I can view all its beauty as deformity; and drown all its pleasures in a few penitent tears; or the wind of a sigh will scatter them away. O let not this flesh so seduce my soul, as to make me prefer this weary life before the joys that are about thy throne! And though death itself be unwelcome to nature, yet let thy grace make thy glory appear to me so desirable, that the king of terrors may be the messenger of my joy! Let not my soul be ejected by violence, and dispossessed of its habitation against its will; but draw it to thyself by the secret power of thy love, as the sunshine in the spring draws forth the creatures from their winter cells: meet it half way, and entice it to thee, as the loadstone doth the iron, and as the greater flame attracts the less! Dispel, therefore, the clouds that hide thy love from me! or remove the scales that hinder mine eyes from beholding thee! For the beams that stream from thy face, and the foretastes of thy great salvation, and nothing else, can make a soul unfeignedly say, 'Now let thy servant depart in peace!' But it is not thy ordinary discoveries that will here suffice: as the work is greater, so must thy help be. O turn these fears into strong desires, and this lostiness to di from thee, let my soul as heartily grown, as my be doth under its want of health! If I have any more time to spend on earth, let me live as without the world in thee, as I have sometimes lived as without thee in the world! While I have a thought to think, let me not forget thee; or a tongue to move, let me mention thee with delight; or a breath to breathe, let it be after thee and for thee; or a knee to bend, let it daily bow at thy footstool! and when by sickness thou confinest me, do thou 'make my bed, number my pains, and put all my tears into thy bottle!'

SECT. XXVII. "As my flesh desired what my spirit abhorred, so now let my spirit desire that day which my flesh abhorreth; that my friends may not with so much sorrow wait for the departure of my soul, as my soul with joy shall wait for its own departure! Then 'let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;' even a removal to that glory which shall never end! Then let thy convoy of angels bring my departing soul among the perfected spirits of the just, and let me follow my dear friends that have died in Christ before me; and while my sorrowing friends are weeping over my grave, let my spirit be reposed with thee in rest; and while my corpse shall lie rotting in the dark, let my soul be 'in the inheritance of the saints in light!' O thou that numberest the very hairs of my head, number all the days that my body lies in the dust; and thou 'that writest all my members in thy book, keep an account of my scattered bones! O my Saviour, hasten the time of thy return: send forth thy angels, and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound! Delay not, lest the living give up their hopes; delay not, lest earth should grow like hell, and thy church, by division, be all crumbled to dust; delay not, lest thy enemies get advantage of thy flock, and lest pride, hypocrisy, sensuality, and unbelief, prevail against thy little remnant, and share among them thy whole inheritance, and, when thou comest, thou find not faith on the earth; delay not, lest the grave should boast of victory, and having learned rebellion of its ruest, should refuse to deliver thee up thy due asten that great resurrection day, when thy comend shall go forth, and none shall disobey; when the sea and earth shall yield up their hostages, and all that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dear an that sheep in the grave shall awake, and the dear in Christ shall rise first; when the seed which tho sowest corruptible, shall come forth incorruptible and graves that required potentials and graves that required potentials. and graves that received rottenness and dust, sha return thee glorious stars and suns! Therefore da I lay down my carcass in the dust, intrusting it, to a grave, but to thee: and therefore my flesh st rest in hope, till thou shalt raise it to the possess of everlasting rest.
Other the kinedom come by the description of the thre kinedom come by the description of the thre kinedom come by the description of the thre kinedom come by the description being a second by the description of the three kinedom come by the description of the d or everlasting rest. Kerurn, O Loru; now to O let thy kingdom come! Thy desolate bride s. Come; for thy spirit within her saith, Come; together the come of the company of teacheth her thus to 'pray with groaning of cannot be uttered, Yea, the whole creation Come, waiting to be delivered from the bond Come, waiting to be delivered from the corruption, into the glorious liberty of the clorruption, into the slorious liberty of the clorruption, into the slorious liberty of the clorruption, into the slorious liberty of the clorruption. of God. Thou thyself hast said, Surely I amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jes

CONCLUSION.

SECT. XXVIII. Thus, reader, I have E my best advice for maintaining a heavenly If thou canst not thus meditate me and fully, yet do it as thou canst; only be it seriously and frequently. Be acquainte heavenly work, and thou wilt, in some acquainted with God; thy joys will prevalent, and lasting, according to the their blessed object; thou wilt have co health, nor the pleasures of this world, have comfort. Without the presence friend, without a minister, without a means are denied thee, or taken from est thou have vigorous, real comp and maye vigorous; and victor



URGED UPON THE READER.

the world as if it were quite below him; fields oods, cities and towns, seem to him but little sp hus despicably wilt thou look on all things h The greatest princes will seem but as gra oppers; the busy, contentious, covetous world, l a heap of ants. Men's threatenings will be rror to thee; nor the honours of this world as rong enticement; temptations will be more harn ss, as having lost their strength; and afflictions les ievous, as having lost their sting; and every ercy will be better known and relished. It is now. ider God, in thy own choice, whether thou wilt ve this blessed life or not; and whether all this ins I have taken for thee shall prosper or be lost. it be lost through thy laziness, thou thyself wilt ove the greatest loser. O man! what hast thou mind but God and heaven? Art thou not almost t of this world already? Dost thou not look every y, when one disease or other will let out thy soul? es not the grave wait to be thine house: and worms 'eed upon thy face and heart? What if thy pulse t beat a few strokes more? what if thou hast a s longer to breathe, before thou breathe out thy a few more nights to sleep, before thou sleepest edust? Alas! what will this be, when it is gone? is it not almost gone already? Very shortly vilt see thy glass run out, and say to thyself, ife is done! My time is gone! It is past recall-'here is nothing now but heaven or hell before Where then shouldst thy heart be now, but en? Didst thou know what a dreadful thing have a doubt of heaven when a man is dying, rouse thee up. And what else but doubt man then do, that never seriously thought before? th so much time and trouble, to think of ss of the joys above: so that we can make e ours, we know they are great. u to have their "couversation

322 HEAVENLY MEDITATIO ven, and to set their affections on t they wilfully make their own lives : fusing the delights which God hath And if this were all, it were a small what abundance of other mischiefs f of these heavenly delights. This ne if not destroy, their love to God; pleasant to them to think or speak o in his service; it tends to pervert concerning the ways and ordinances them sensual and voluptuous; it les the power of every affliction and ten preparative to total apostacy; it will fearful and unwilling to die: For a God or a place he hath no delight leave his pleasure here, if he had not Had I only proposed a course of fear, and sorrow, you might reasonab But you must have heavenly deligh are lasting. God is willing you sl with him, and fetch in consolations lasting fountain; if you are unwillin loss; and when you are dying, seek f you can get it, and see whether fles remain with you, then conscience w spite of you, that you was once per for more excellent pleasures,-pleas have followed you through death, ar eternity. SECT. XXX. As for you, whose weaned from all things here below. value this heavenly life, and take day in the New Jerusalem. God is your desire; you would fain be r with your Saviour; and I know it is your hearts are not nearer to him, not more feelingly love him, and de try this life of meditation on you Here is the mount, on which the your souls may rest. Let the beavenly lives, that religion is a

opinions and disputes, or a talk of outward duties. If ever a Christian is like himself, and answerable to his principles and profession, it is when he is most serious and lively in this duty. As Moses, before he died, went up into mount Nebo, to take a survey of the land of Canaan; so the Christian ascends the mount of Contemplation, and by faith surveys his rest. He looks upon the glorious mansions and says, "Glorious things are deservedly spoken of thee, thou city of God!" He hears, as it were, the melody of the heavenly choir, and says, "Happy are the people that are in such a case! Yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!" He looks upon the glorified inhabitants, and says, "Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, O people, saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thine excellency!" When he looks upon the Lord himself, who is their glory, he is ready with the rest to "fall down and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come! Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power!" When he looks on the glorified Saviour, he is ready to say "Amen" to that new song, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests!" When he looks back on the wilderness of this world, he blesses the believing, patient, despised saints; he pities the ignorant, obstinate, miserable world; and for himself, he says, as Peter, "It is good to be here;" or as Asaph, "It is good for me to draw near to God; for, lo! they that are far from thee shall perish." Thus, as they that are far from thee shall perish." Daniel in his captivity daily opened his window wards Jerusalem, though far out of sight, when he went to God in his devotions; so may the believing soul in this captivity of the flesh look towards the salem which is above." And as Paul was to the C

lossians, so may the believer be with the glorified spirits, though absent in the flesh, yet with them in the spirit, joying and beholding their heavenly order. And as the lark sweetly sings, while she soars on high, but is suddenly silenced when she falls to the earth; so is the frame of the soul most delightful and divine, while it keeps in the views of God by contemplation. Alas, we make there too short a stay; fall down again, and lay by our music!

SECT. XXXI. But, "O thou, the merciful Father of spirits, the attractive of love, and ocean of delights, draw up these drossy hearts unto thyself, and keep them there till they are spiritualized and renewed: and second thy servant's weak endeavours, and persuade those that read these lines to the practice of this delightful and heavenly work! O suffer not the soul of thy most unworthy servant to be a stranger to those joys which he describes to others; but keep me, while I remain on earth, in daily breathings after thee; and in a believing, affectionate walking with thee! And when thou comest, let me be found so doing; not serving my flesh, nor asleep with my lamp unfurnished; but waiting and longing for my Lord's return! Let those who shall read these heavenly directions, not merely read the fruit of my studies, but the breathing of my active hope and love: that if my heart were open to their view, they might there read the same most deeply engraven with a beam from the face of the Son of God; and not find vanity, or lust, or pride within, when the words of life appear without; that so these lines may not witness against me; but proceeding from the heart of the writer, may be effectual, through thy grace, upon the heart of the reader, and so be the savour of life

"Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace;

good will towards men."









